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A
HOUSE OF STORIES

BY CHARLOTTE M. YONTE

STORIES OF THE

OLDEN TIMES

AND THE NEW

AND THE NEW



London: Charles Mack
MACMILLAN AND CO.



A
STOREHOUSE OF STORIES

EDITED BY

CHARLOTTE M. YONGE

STOREHOUSE THE SECOND

CONTAINING

FAMILY STORIES

A PUZZLE FOR A CURIOUS GIRL

ELEMENTS OF MORALITY

BLOSSOMS OF MORALITY



London and New York
MACMILLAN AND CO.

1872

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PREFACE.

THE history of 'Family Stories' is unknown to me. They both alike descended to me from previous generations, and were such favourites that I have ventured to try to rescue them from oblivion. They have a French smack about them as if translations, but I have never been able to meet with them anywhere.

'Elements of Morality' were translated from the German of Christian Gotthilf Salzmann, by Mary Woolstoncroft, towards the end of the last century, and first appeared with some excellent engravings by Blake, full of a vigour that no reproduction could convey. No child who ever saw them could forget the Boy bewildered in the wood, or the Miser's ragged dressing-gown.

The object of the 'Moralisches Elementarbuch' seems to have been to inculcate some brief proverbial sentence as the moral of each chapter—such as 'The pleasure of doing good is the sweetest of all pleasures;' and it is impossible not to observe, that the Moralities, so far as they go, are just those of the Encyclopædists, and go not a bit further. The mother is killed at the end in order to afford occasion to the saying, 'My soul is immortal, and goes to God;' and this is the nearest approach to a religious faith throughout the book.

Mary Woolstoncroft tells us in her preface that, when learning German, she was pleased to find 'that chance had thrown in my way a very rational book,' and proceeded to arrange it for publication, making it an English story, as she says, because she did not 'wish to puzzle children with modifications of manners, when the grand principles of morality were to be fixed on a broad basis.'

An introductory address follows, curiously declaring that, to show the inconvenience of a fault in another person, is to make it hateful to the child in himself. Then, according to this system, religion is to show the means of subduing it; but morality, it seems, is to come first, then doctrine. Afterwards there is a table of the duties enforced in the story, regularly drawn out with references to the chapter. Thus:

I. Duties to ourselves.

The Body.

Health { *In general.*
With respect to our limbs.

The first reference is to the Sick Gentleman, whom the translator made into a baronet; the second to the Beggar, who had crippled himself by adventurous climbing. Looking at the table with grown-up eyes it is very quaint; but we confess that, in our childhood, we never knew that it existed, though 'Mr. Jones,' as we used to call the book, was a prime favourite with two generations; and we are anxious to try whether it will be the same with a third. We, caring less for the 'sound basis,' or rather not having such magnificent hopes of the effects of this study as the translator, have thought it would be rather enlivening to compare the 'modifications of customs,' and have therefore in many cases put the original in a note.

Of the 'Puzzle for a Curious Girl' I know nothing, save its existence in my nursery library, and my own gratitude to

it for a certain shame as to over-inquisitiveness into other people's matters. The few tales that follow are from 'Blossoms of Morality,' an odd little compilation, which professes to be intended for somewhat older readers. These are the best. At least they are the tales that made a lodgment in my mind, though where they came from I cannot guess. The only tales I ever met like any of them is a much finer version of the Statue story among Miss Busk's *Patrañas*; and perhaps the Retired Vizier and his Birds may be a parody of Diocletian and the Cabbages.

The rest of the book is taken up with some ineffably ridiculous modern stories—one, whose hero and heroine rejoice in the titles of Dorcas and Amaryllis, showing the good effects of Sunday Schools; and there are also some solemn discussions on the Virtues between some gentlemen and ladies. Remembering that to see these was to avoid them, I spare them to my readers.

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STOREHOUSE OF STORIES.

FAMILY STORIES;

OR,

EVENINGS AT MY GRANDMOTHER'S, ETC.

I AM the youngest of eight children with which my mother presented her affectionate husband; and as she generally introduced us as regular as the year came round, it followed, of course, that when my worthy father received me, his last blessing, to his arms, my eldest brother had completed the eighth year of his age. It was at this tender period of our infancy, when he was taken from his family, by that unrelenting hand which spares neither youth nor age, my good mother, finding herself burdened with the education of so many sons, resolved on making a journey to the residence of her mother, who was a most worthy and truly respectable character, in the hope that if she once beheld her little grandsons, she would generously relieve her widowed daughter from the heavy weight with which she now found herself oppressed. Ideas so favourable to her own future comfort were soon realised; and my brothers and self made over to the care of our indulgent grandmother, with whom, four years, we diverted ourselves; for during that time we did little else, and through her kindness had all our wishes gratified. About this period our mother died; and, soon after this melancholy event, that dear parent, who had so tenderly sheltered the family, was also snatched from us; and

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we must have become orphans in the fullest acceptation of the word, had not our great aunt, who was some years younger than that kind and respectable woman, taken us to live with her; but alas! at the age of twelve, I had the inexpressible sorrow to weep over the cold remains of this beloved relation, who was also taken from us, to reap the recompense of that active virtue and universal benevolence, which in this world had so strongly marked her blameless life. It was this short afflictive loss which occasioned us to fall into the hands of the brother to our deceased father, a man who had travelled with advantage through most of the countries of Europe, and was but recently returned, to pass the remainder of his days in that land which had given him birth; he immediately sent for us, his now unprotected nephews, having determined to take upon himself our future establishment in life. It is the method made use of in the progress of the education we received from my grandmother, my aunt, and this dear uncle, which I propose to give the public in those different parts, each to be compressed in two small volumes. The tales selected by my grandmother, for our improvement, were those of the fairies; my aunt made choice of such as should at the same time convey amusement and instruction, being of a moral tendency, unaided by the marvellous; and as we arrived at a more advanced period of our lives, the highly-cultivated mind of our more enlightened preceptor constantly brought forward, during our morning repast (which, when the weather would admit of such excursions, was constantly taken in the fields), models of virtue for our imitation, or held up to our contemplation those who had deviated from her paths, in a light well calculated to deter his young and attentive auditors from ever passing the strict line which can only lead to honour and respect in this world, and everlasting happiness in that to which we look forward with hope and trust, as the sure reward for all the sorrows the most fortunate must expect to meet in this valley of affliction.

By the plan thus commenced in our infancy, and carried on by those so every way equal to an undertaking of such magnitude and importance, the instructions we had the ad-

vantage to receive from our three most respectable relations acquired more and more interest as we grew towards manhood; but to proceed with it in order, I must begin the following collection of moral entertainment with the fairy tales of my grandmother. I have already said, that at the time she first received us to her hospitable roof and sheltering protection, we had just attained the ages of five, six, seven, and eight years, all tractable, but lively children, at least, so I have heard those who have had the charge of us declare. Our grandmamma was a widow of seventy, a good country lady, pious, charitable, and humane; respected by her more affluent neighbours, and regarded as a blessing by the poor, to whom her willing hand never refused the bounty solicited from her scanty purse, which was ever shared by those whose allotted situation was less comfortable than her own; my aunt Nanny was the beloved sharer of her little store of wealth, and they inhabited together a small but comfortable farm, in the modest bosom of a retired, though beautiful village; increasing their small yearly income by growing corn for the consumption of their own family, rearing poultry, pigs, and cows; in which task they were assisted by a faithful servant, almost as aged as his mistresses. On our introduction to this comfortable little community, we deranged all the order which before our arrival had been observed in their neat and quiet cottage; and unfortunate was it for the garden and yard, in which the eight little boys were allowed to play their gambols. My grandmother was indulgent even to a fault; and never were we at rest but in the evenings, before we had our suppers, when it was her custom to place her spinning-wheel by the fireside, next to which her sister Nanny sat at her patchwork, whilst we surrounded the contented little party, and with surprise and delight listened to the tales which interested us so much.

At these moments you could have heard a pin fall on the floor of the little parlour in which we were assembled, so highly occupied were the turbulent children with the simple relations which I have retraced for the instruction and improvement of my young friends, who are now at that happy age to be amused as I was then, under the fostering wing of

my dear old grandmamma, with her simple little legends. Lend me your attention, my dear little readers, for my grandmamma is now about to address us in her own plain and unadorned style, which has only the eloquence of nature to recommend it to the approbation of others.

EVENING THE FIRST.

THE clock had struck seven, when my grandmother entered the room, in which myself and brothers had already littered round our dear and indulgent aunt Nanny ; it was early in the month of March, and by the light afforded from a blazing fire, we could all perceive that, while lighting her candle, she appeared to be agitated by emotions of anger, and looking round on us little culprits, who without knowing why, trembled with apprehension, she cried, in a voice many degrees above the soft and sweet tones in which she usually spoke to us, her darling boys ! ‘ Which of you is it, who during my absence has opened the door of my great cupboard which stands in the hall ? whoever it is, they must have taken the key from out of my pocket ; for I had carefully locked it up with my own hands, and I am determined to discover the perpetrator of this offence—ah,’ continued she, observing us with more attention, ‘ which of you is it, who is, at this very moment, sneaking behind his brothers ? I verily believe I have found the thief, who so dishonourably stole the key, which was to gratify his curiosity ; come forward, Adolphus ! your consciousness has made me detect you ; and I need no other proofs than your blushes, and your having attempted to screen yourself behind your innocent brothers.’ My brother, with faltering steps, and eyes bent on the ground, drew near the spinning wheel before which she had now placed her chair ; and was very deliberately regaling herself with a pinch of snuff. ‘ So, it was you, sir, who opened my walnut-tree cupboard.’ ‘ My dear grandmamma, I ——’ ‘ Stop, before you have uttered a falsehood, and reflect that you must not add to the sin of one fault by committing a much greater one, bad as it is.’

'Well, then (the tears fast falling as he spoke), it was me, I confess; and I am very, very sorry.' 'And pray what motive had you for this unworthy action?' 'I wished to see nearer than you had ever shown it to us, that large silver chain which I saw you lock up with so much care.' 'And how did you procure the key?' 'Your pockets were on the table in your bedroom this morning, and you not being at home, I thought I might take one peep at that beautiful chain without your knowing what I had done; and fastened the door so close, that I am astonished how you could perceive it had ever been opened but by yourself.' 'Truly, I should at this moment have been ignorant of your wickedness, if I had not discovered in the cupboard an incontrovertible witness of your crime; and it was that which brought to my knowledge the black transaction.' 'A witness in the cupboard! dearest grandmamma, pray tell me who it was!' 'Yes, you little fool, you did not observe in the haste which guilt never fails to inspire, that you had made a prisoner of the cat. I had placed on one of the shelves a large basin of fine cream, reserved for your suppers, but the cat has taken it all for her own; so that this night your innocent brothers will suffer for your fault. Such is ever the certain effects of unwarrantable curiosity; and it is this which recalls to my remembrance the history of a little girl who suffered many sorrows owing to the same fault that you, Adolphus, possess in so great a degree; but sit down, my children, and listen to my tale, which I hope will deter you in future from a repetition of so great an offence.' My grandmother began to spin; Adolphus, covered with the blushes of shame and contrition, crept round us, and the story commenced.

ROSABELLE AND PARIDEL; OR, THE LITTLE GREY MOUSE.

There was once upon a time a woodcutter, who for nearly fifteen years had been deprived of an amiable and affectionate wife, who was snatched from his arms in giving life to a little girl, who even in the early dawn of infancy

gave such a promise of future loveliness, that she had been named Rosabelle. They lived in a small cottage, the mansion of content, which was embosomed in the centre of that wood from whence the good peasant gained a scanty support for himself and this his darling child, by cutting trees in the forest. Each morning he arose from his pallet of rushes with the lark ; and patient of labour, he walked forth strong and cheerfully to his daily toil ; meanwhile his daughter prepared for her kind parent the comfortable repast his own industry had earned. In the evening, when the western sun called home the early bird, he also sought his comfort and his rest, which was rendered more delightful to him, as it proved the dutiful attention of the only comfort heaven had now left to solace his declining years. Rosabelle was beautiful, good, and gentle as a lamb ; she constituted the happiness of her anxious father, and but in one instance could he have wished her different from what she really was. She had a fault, a great one it was, an excessive curiosity ; and many hours in the day did she pass in listening to all the little anecdotes of the neighbouring villagers, which of an evening she would report, to entertain, as she supposed, her fatigued father, by the relation of all which had appeared so interesting to herself. But it had quite a contrary effect on her sleepy auditor, who having no other way of silencing his prattling girl, generally retired to that repose which labour and a clear conscience always ensure after the exertions of honest and cheerful industry. The little curious Rosabelle had long remarked, with increasing surprise, that two or three times, in the course of every day, her father went alone to a small outhouse, of which himself always kept the key ; at these times he uniformly forbid the attendance of his child, and generally stayed some minutes in the mysterious spot, from which he withdrew with the greatest caution possible. Rosabelle had a thousand times questioned him on the subject, but could not gain any satisfactory replies to those inquiries, with which she never ceased tormenting her good and indulgent parent. One evening, that she had been more pressing than usual, Dametas taking her kindly by the hand, with a deep sigh, replied, 'that

which you are so anxious to be informed of is a secret, my love, which were I to reveal before you had completed your fifteenth year, would, in all probability, be the destruction of us both. Have patience then, dearest girl—in six days that time, for the arrival of which I have so anxiously sighed, will be passed, and you shall then know the motives which actuate my present conduct.’ Rosabelle, in a very ill-humour, received the tender caresses of her considerate father, and retired to her bed, from which curiosity had banished sleep: all the night did she occupy her mind by conjectures respecting this hidden mystery; and the more impenetrable it appeared, the more desirous she became for its development. At the first peep of morning she arose, determined to try every method by which it was possible she might gain admittance into a place which so much excited her ardent and highly reprehensible curiosity. She softly crept to the apartment of her sleeping father, and quietly drew from his pocket the key that would at once end her wishes, by affording the full information she was so eager to receive; flattering herself chance would present a favourable moment to restore it to his pocket after her secret visit had been paid, as he never went to this magic spot until his return from the wood at nine o'clock to breakfast: he kissed his guilty child at leaving the cottage door, without having discovered the theft she had committed. And now that Rosabelle was alone, and at full liberty to pursue the dictates of her mind, she hastened to the fatal place, drawing the key with trembling hands from her bosom; but when she reached the door, her heart throbbed with violence, owing to the whispering voice of conscience, which told her she was acting with impropriety, by deviating from the commands of a parent, who had a right to her implicit obedience. In six days she was to know all he had condescended to tell her; ‘so that is not very long to wait,’ said she; ‘I shall then be fifteen, and the danger, my father says, at that period will be no more.’ Was it not terrible, my dear boys, that notwithstanding this reflection, she had not resolution to wait the appointed time? but alas! Rosabelle had not received the gift of patience, and insatiable curiosity over-

came every principle of duty, to the will of him who had a right to govern her every action. The key was now placed in the lock, she turned it, and obedient to her trembling touch the door flew open. She looked with eagerness into a place not more than three feet in circumference, but did not see anything to engage her observation. With an air of mortification and disappointment, casting her eyes on the ground, a grey mouse caught her attention. It began immediately to laugh with violence. This astonished Rosabelle; but how her surprise increased when the little animal addressed her as follows: 'I have now to thank you, my sweet Rosabelle, for having thus released me from the horrors of this gloomy prison, in which I have been doomed to languish almost fifteen years; but now, thanks to your curiosity, farewell to my confinement!' On saying which, the mouse ran past the affrighted girl, and began running about the courtyard as if delighted with the fresh air and its regained liberty. Rosabelle was simple enough to suppose it would return at her request; and she ran after the little animal, calling at the same time, 'Little grey mouse, whither are you going? for heaven's sake return to your trap, and do not occasion me the anger of my dear father, who, by your flight, will discover the whole of my imprudence.' The mouse was perfectly heedless of the distress she had, by having committed such an act of disobedience, brought upon herself, and continued to frisk about free and unconfined, as if deaf to her cries and entreaties; at length it stopped its gambols, and looking steadfastly at her, said, 'It is out of my power to grant the favour you now request of me; all that I can do is to follow your steps wherever you go, and be assured it will be a long time, if ever, before you shall lose me from your sight.' 'Stop, detested little wretch,' returned the despairing girl; 'yonder is my cat, who will quickly pick your little vile bones;' and she immediately called Minet towards her. Minet hastened to obey the summons, and was purring round his fair mistress, when he cast an eager eye on his destined prey; then making a spring forward, in a moment it must have been devoured, had not Minet instantly become transformed into a frightful large black toad, who with the most horrible croakings hopped off from the spot.

The terrified Rosabelle shed torrents of tears, but she had not leisure to indulge the effusions of sorrow; the fault was over, and her father, whose return she every moment expected, must without doubt discover and punish her as she deserved for the act of disobedience she had committed. In order to gain time, she carefully fastened the door of the little prison, and entered the cottage; the tormenting mouse, as it had threatened, followed her steps, and continually kept looking in her face, seeming to mock her grief. It was in vain that she endeavoured to catch it; the velocity of its movements set hers at defiance, and she had nearly resigned the chase, when perceiving a large pitcher of water on the table, she snatched it up, and hastily threw it over her persevering enemy; but what was her vexation on observing the water change into a stream of the most delicious cream, of which the mouse began to eat very composedly. Overcome by passion, she now snatched up the broom, with an intent to knock the little animal on the head; but, astonishing to relate, the handle of it was instantly converted into a bar of red hot iron, which she was obliged, in order to escape from being burnt to death, immediately to throw out of the window. At length the clock struck nine; the heart of the disobedient Rosabelle was bursting, and she said, as the last resource, 'Dear mouse! I hear my father; go, I beseech you.' 'No,' said the impenetrable tormentor; 'I cannot quit you.' 'He is at this moment in the yard! I hear him shut the garden gate; hide yourself for heaven's sake, at least behind me, if you will not leave the house, that you may escape his observation on his first entrance.' 'Well, as you have been so kind a friend to me, in this request, I will oblige you.' At the very moment Dametas entered. 'My love,' said he, 'how came so much cream to be spilt on the floor?' 'Father, I broke the basin, and——' 'It was awkwardly done; but fetch me the broom, and I will wipe it up for you.' 'The broom was worn out and good for nothing, so I have burnt it.' 'As that is the case, call the cat, and he will gain a good breakfast by the heedlessness of my Rosabelle.' 'My dear father, our Minet has gone with some of his companions, and I know not where to search for him.' 'How unfortunate! we shall perhaps lose our

little puss, who is so excellent at catching the mice, with which we are tormented.' 'Indeed, father, I do not think he is so good a mouser.'

Dametas, who regretted his favourite Minet, took two or three turns about the chamber, and Rosabelle walked close behind him, trembling, lest he should see the mouse, who was hidden under her gown: at last he put his hand in his pocket, and missed the fatal key. 'Rosabelle,' cried he, 'have you seen a small key which I just miss?' 'My father, here it is; I suppose it must have fallen from your pocket, for I found it just after you went out this morning.' Dametas took the key from the trembling hand of his conscious, agitated daughter, and, as he did so, he looked her sternly in the face; but she had not strength of mind to confess her fault, and throw herself on the mercy of her abused parent. He proceeded to the shed, where not finding his prisoner, he uttered the most lamentable cries and passionate exclamations. Rosabelle bathed in tears, fell at his feet; and now, for the first time, Dametas beheld the little grey mouse.

'Unhappy girl!' exclaimed he, 'you know not what it is you have brought upon us both, by having thus released our most bitter enemy, in whose power your imprudent curiosity has placed us. But listen, without interruption, to that which I am about to disclose to you. At the unfortunate moment your sainted mother gave you to the world, she suffered so much that, to avoid her last cries, I ran, like a man deprived of sense, to the forest, in the midst of which I saw a person in a profound sleep, lying on the grass; an enormous adder was fastening itself round his neck; I advanced, and with my knife destroyed the reptile: the stranger awoke, and seeing what I had done, thanked me for having saved his life.' 'Worthy woodcutter,' said he, 'tell me in what manner I can, by rendering you a service, convince you of the gratitude I feel for the benefit you have conferred on me? I am an enchanter; but know, at the same time I give you this information, one wish only have I the power to grant to you—declare your choice; shall it be wealth? will you have a thousand years added to your

life? or do you prefer becoming a great man, to have castles and lands at your disposal? You have only to inform me of your choice, and it shall be given to you.' 'Ah, no! my unambitious heart sighs not for what would be received as blessings by thousands: all I request of you, is the restoration of my beloved wife, and the life of that little one she is now bringing into the world.' The fairy promised me his good offices, and followed to my cottage; but, alas! it was too late; my angel wife was no more; and he had not the power to restore departed life. He took you, imprudent Rosabelle! in his arms. 'I endow,' said he, 'this little girl with sense, beauty, and every perfection, both of mind and body. At fifteen she shall become the wife of a man exalted by rank.' 'Yes,' interrupted a small shrill voice, 'provided, before that period is elapsed, she does not commit three great faults, through that excess of curiosity with which I myself will gift her.'

I looked round to find from whence the voice proceeded, and for some time beheld nothing which could have uttered the prediction; when casting my eyes on the floor, I saw that little grey mouse, who was gazing steadfastly at us. 'Ah! we are lost!' said the enchanter; 'it is the Fairy Maligna, whom a council of Genii has for a hundred years condemned to appear in the form of a mouse; a punishment incurred for having, through a spirit of vengeance, set fire to some hundred towns and villages. She has ever been my most mortal foe, and now follows you, for having killed her beloved adder whom she sent on purpose to destroy me. I have not the power to do away her prediction; but if you can confine her in some place until your daughter has attained the age of fifteen, I will answer for it she cannot injure you.' 'Ah! but my kind friend,' I said, 'how is it possible for me to catch her? a mouse is so alert, I never can accomplish it.' 'That is true,' he replied, 'though I think I can put you in a method to secure her; for though she be a fairy, yet does she possess all the inclinations of the little animal into which she is transformed, and is as fond of grease as any of her kind. Have you such a thing in the house?' I searched and found some butter. 'Go,'

said he,' 'place it in your yard, and if she eats of it, she becomes your captive.' It turned out as my friend had predicted; the mouse eat of the tempting morsel, and I confined her to the small residence, that by the power of enchantment was immediately raised round her, while yet devouring the grease. Of this place, my friend gave me the key, saying, 'Remember, this is a talisman in your hands only; while you have it, should the door even be left open, she cannot escape your power; but should any other person get possession of it before your daughter has reached her fifteenth year, I can no longer answer for her, or you, who will both instantly fall into the hands of this malignant fairy. At least Rosabelle will not escape the three faults curiosity will prompt her to commit.' On saying these words, the enchanter vanished from my sight; and during your infancy, I could perceive, that though highly gifted with all the good my kind friend had promised, the evil seeds of unwarrantable curiosity were fast springing in your heart: this made me tremble; and I determined to hide from you the mystery of my little prisoner; and I cannot express with what delight I was looking forward to the expiration of those six days which would render secrecy no longer necessary; and now, through your imprudence, all my endeavours, all my hopes are destroyed! by the mouse having escaped, we are this moment in the power of that wicked fairy; and whatever fate she reserves for us, I fear more for you, my child, than for that which can happen to myself: at least this lesson may be useful. Already one fault out of the three is passed; the commission of the two others will ruin you for ever; avoid for six days only that evil which still hangs over you; the time is not long, and I may yet live to behold you once more happy.' Thus spoke the forgiving parent; and the little grey mouse, who had listened with attention to all he had been saying, now in her turn began to speak. 'It is time,' exclaimed she, 'I should revenge the barbarous murder of my dear adder; you, who committed the wicked deed, shall remain transfixed to the spot you now stand on, till the destiny of your daughter shall be decided; for at present she is not quite my subject, but, depend on it, I will

never leave her until she is fallen into those other faults which will give me the absolute and desired dominion over her future life. I take her with me—adieu.'

Dametas rendered furious at having his daughter thus torn from him, advanced to strike the wicked fairy with a stick he held in his hand; but she pressed on his foot with one of her little paws, and he became immovable as a statue, in the attitude of a man who is in the act of striking some one. Rosabelle, the wretched Rosabelle, at beholding her inanimate father, uttered shrieks of agony; the room quickly filled with flames of fire, and to avoid being stifled by the smoke she flew into the yard, where she was astonished to observe the building which had confined the fairy was removed, and not a vestige of its ever having been remained. The fire continued to proceed from the cottage, and without knowing what she did, the terrified girl sought refuge in the fields. Night was advanced, and she had continued to walk on without once looking about her, when she found herself in the midst of a thick wood: fatigue, and the fast approaching darkness, forced her to seek repose, by seating herself at the foot of a large spreading tree. She then perceived two eyes, which shone like the finest diamonds, fixed upon her; and beheld, with sorrow, that they were those of the little grey mouse, who still continued to haunt her steps. 'Wicked one,' cried she in agony, 'retire, and leave me to support the sorrows you have heaped on my heart, without having the additional misfortune of again beholding your detested little form.' The mouse did not reply, and Rosabelle continued, 'I know very well that you follow me in order that I may be led to commit those other faults on which you place so great a dependence; but I swear that no temptation, however powerful, shall again induce me to fall into your power; and my tongue shall fasten to my mouth before it shall make me culpable of such an excess of curiosity as has this day occasioned me so much misery.' The mouse still kept the most profound silence; and Rosabelle, overwhelmed with fatigue and agitation of spirits, fell into a sweet sleep: towards the middle of the night, she was awakened by the soft pressure of a hand;

on opening her eyes, she was astonished at the glare of a hundred flambeaux, by whose brilliant beams she beheld a troop of horsemen, each of whom held a light more dazzling than the brightest star; the horses, as well as their riders, were loaded with gold and precious stones, whilst the perfumes which they burnt filled the air with the most delightful odours; but the object which most sensibly affected the heart of Rosabelle was a very beautiful young man who had seated himself beside her, and who held her hand fast locked in his own. 'Fear nothing,' cried he to Rosabelle, who trembled violently, 'I am called Paridel; and came this night to hunt in the forest, when I beheld you, my sleeping charmer, who have for ever fixed my heart your own; come then to my palace, of which you shall be the presiding divinity; and my only happiness be to love and serve you.'

Rosabelle hesitated, but the soft voice and tender looks of the handsome Paridel conquered; and she consented, with modest sweetness, to follow him. She remarked with rapture, on looking round, that the grey mouse was no where visible, and flattered herself she should now escape the power of her foe. At this moment her graceful companion touched a horse chestnut, which had just dropped from the tree, and it instantly was converted into a most splendid chariot, glittering with gold and gems, into which the daughter of the good and humble woodcutter was handed by her new and captivating friend, who seated himself by her. 'Surely,' thought she, 'this certainly must be an enchanter, and he will perhaps deliver me from this wicked fairy who seeks my destruction!' In an instant the carriage, followed by the whole splendid train, arrived at a superb palace, where several attendants waited to receive the orders of the blushing, timid Rosabelle. She was soon served with a sumptuous collation, and, during the repast, the most delightful music caught her ear; while the lord of this mansion, the graceful, the elegant Paridel, evinced, by every expression and look, his attention, his respect, and love. Rosabelle spoke but little; she was nearly overpowered by her good fortune, and had nothing left to wish for but the company of that father whom she had, by her own im-

prudence, made so completely wretched. After supper she was conducted to a bed of the finest silver muslin trimmed with the richest lace, and ornamented with knots of different coloured gems. She slept till morning, when the attentive youth came to receive her orders. 'Amiable prince,' said she, 'how have I been so fortunate as to merit this kindness, this unbounded attention from you?' 'My lovely and gentle friend,' he replied, 'a fairy predicted that I should find, sleeping in a wood, the woman fate had destined for my wife, when the clock stroke three, and the sparrows chirped thrice. It was to accomplish this destiny that I hunted last night in the forest, which, gifted by the fairy, became bright as midday; and it was impossible I could mistake my happy fortune, for when I beheld you sleeping, the village clock struck three, and the sparrows had already twittered out their morning song.' Paridel was going on in this recital, when the door of the apartment burst open, and three servants entered, pursuing the little grey mouse, who immediately took shelter under Rosabelle. 'This plaguing little animal,' said one of the domestics, 'has this whole night, my lord, been running about the palace; and notwithstanding our utmost endeavours, it has not been possible to catch it.' Rosabelle grew pale as death on the reappearance of her bitterest foe; the enraptured prince soon observed the agitation of her mind, and requested to be informed what had occasioned it. She desired the attendants to be dismissed, and recounted to her amiable auditor every circumstance of the prediction. 'Fear nothing, my only love,' said he; 'while you continue here, I will pledge myself it shall not be in her power to harm you.' The prince would have driven the mouse from the room, but on searching round, it was no longer to be seen; and he quitted his beloved Rosabelle to be dressed in the most sumptuous robes by the women appointed to attend upon her. On rising from her toilet, she was more beautiful than ever; and descended to the garden, where her enamoured prince waited to exhibit to her wondering sight all the curiosities his domain afforded; when he had conducted his fair visitor through all its numberless beauties, he pointed out a small building to her observation,

which he said was a hothouse, and contained a treasure the most precious to him. 'Allow me,' he continued, 'at present, to pass this by in silence; one day, if you will honour me by becoming my wife, you shall be fully informed respecting it; for then, I trust, it will be as much your preservation as my own.' Rosabelle grew thoughtful on hearing these words, and requested of her amiable lover permission to return to her own apartment, where, without interruption, she reflected on all that had passed during their walk. 'What,' exclaimed she (not contented with all the riches and splendour which had been laid open to her inspection), 'has he still an inestimable deposit, which none but a wife is to behold? it must certainly be a talisman, which would disenchant my beloved father.' This idea now became the sole stimulus to her curiosity, and she could not rest till she had discovered its contents. At this moment the grey mouse presented itself to her eyes, and brought to her recollection the danger she ran, by giving way, under any pretence whatever, to those emotions, the indulgence of which had already cost her so dear. The day was spent in doubt and uneasiness, which neither the amusements so liberally prepared for her entertainment, or that which was still more delightful, the tender attentions of her lover, could banish for a moment from her heart. During the night a thousand reflections occupied her mind; the mysterious hothouse ever presented itself to her recollection; and she determined, at all risks, to gain possession of a talisman she was now certain would disenchant her suffering parent. At the first blush of morning she arose from her bed, and descended to that side of the ground in which stood the hothouse. Some curtains of green silk were drawn round the windows, which had been opened to give air to the plants. Rosabelle perceived one of them had been torn, and it would be easy, she imagined, to creep through it; this she immediately endeavoured to do; and at length, without difficulty, entered this desired spot, in which she only beheld some beautiful flowers and fine busts, which ornamented the corners of the room; in the middle of which stood a luxuriant pomegranate tree, that bore the largest and finest fruit she had ever seen.

'How delicious they must be,' cried she; 'surely the prince, who overpowers me with all that is delightful, would not be displeased that I had gratified myself by plucking this delicious pomegranate!' As she spoke, she tore it from the bough on which it had grown, and hiding it beneath her robe, she ran into the park to taste at her leisure the tempting fruit. Scarcely had she divided it, when a loud noise behind made her turn her head, and what was her astonishment, at no more beholding the superb palace she had just quitted! In its place she saw a heap of ruins, from which came out a man, much deformed and clothed in rags, who ran towards the immovable and trembling Rosabelle, at whose feet the little grey mouse now appeared, and in accents of delight thus addressed her victim, 'Behold, Rosabelle, the full accomplishment of your second fault; the third is not far distant: confess, had I not good claws to divide the curtain which gave you admittance to the wonderful hothouse?' At this moment the unknown man approached them. 'Cruel Rosabelle!' exclaimed he, 'know you not the unhappy Paridel, in the terrible state to which you have reduced him? I received you to my heart, as the best gift of heaven, and you have rewarded my disinterested affection by devouring a pomegranate which a fairy had bestowed, to render me beautiful, rich, and great. Each morning I opened this highly-prized fruit, a single seed of which procured me the fulfilment of every wish my heart could form. Weak, culpable Rosabelle! go, follow your wicked mouse, whose influence has reduced me so low; and remember that you have destroyed me, and that I quit you for ever.' The wretched Rosabelle wept, groaned, and tore her hair; in vain calling on her dear prince to return, who, as he fled from her, repeated in a loud voice, 'If you have resolution to resist the commission of the third fault, you will again behold me.' She now began to walk forward, and saw with indescribable concern, that the malignant mouse continued to follow her like a dog. She uselessly reproached it with having destroyed her happiness, for the little creature continued to skip and run before her, till heart-broken and overpowered with fatigue, towards the middle of the day.

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she stopped at the cottage of a peasant to request a glass of water, and the liberty of resting her wearied limbs; but the man, observing her attendant, refused to let her in. She now entered the village, and as she passed, every person turned her and her travelling companion into the greatest ridicule. Towards the close of the third day she fell almost fainting on the grass. Overpowered by the agonising conflicts of her tortured heart, her eyes were lifted to heaven, which she implored to release her from her trials, and she was giving way to all the horrors of despair, when she beheld, passing near to her, an old woman, who tottered under a heavy burden. Rosabelle remarked, that at this moment the grey mouse disappeared; it seemed a favourable omen. 'Have pity on me, dear mother!' cried she, 'for I am dying of hunger, thirst, and fatigue.' 'Ah! my sweet child,' cried the old lady, 'wait a moment, and I will fetch you some water from a brook a few steps from this spot.' In order to accomplish her charitable errand with the greater speed, she laid her burden down by the side of Rosabelle, and immediately left her. This parcel was carefully covered with a thick cloth. 'What,' thought Rosabelle, 'can this contain? Surely the looking into it could not be of the least injury to any person, and she was just on the point of doing so, when the old woman hobbled towards her, saying as she approached, 'What a fool I was to leave you with this casket! If you had seen its contents, we should both of us have suffered for it. It is made of glass, and contains precious stones, of such dazzling brilliancy, that whoever gazes upon them loses their sight instantaneously; and to you, my dear, who have such sweet pretty eyes, it would be a dreadful misfortune indeed. However, you will promise me not to give way to the impulse of curiosity, and I will leave you in charge of my treasure while I run to my house to procure some refreshment for you, my sweet one.' 'Indeed, my good mother, I will not touch it.' 'Well, then, I will trust you, and come back for the casket, which I am carrying to a famous enchanter, who lives at a short distance from hence.'

The old woman again walked off, and left Rosabelle a prey to that fatal curiosity which had already occasioned

her so much distress. 'How very curious,' thought she, 'must this casket be! made of crystal, and containing jewels, which only to look upon would make one blind.' But the third fault presented itself to her recollection; and for some time she resisted; but it must be confessed that it is more than probable she would at last have yielded to her wishes, had not the grey mouse began to nibble the cloth which covered the mysterious casket, without doubt to afford her an opportunity of gaining a transient view of its contents, and by this means to render her the more desirous of beholding it altogether. 'Wretch,' cried Rosabelle, pressing close to her bosom the precious deposit, 'if you dare come near me, I will wring that little neck from your vile body.' The tempter, awed by the resolution of her manner, durst not advance; and the gloom of night dropped its black curtain over the face of nature, without the old woman having again made her appearance, as if to increase the ardent curiosity of Rosabelle. Notwithstanding the darkness with which she would have been surrounded, the casket shone with a lustre which illuminated everything about it; but, for once reasonable, in spite of the seductions of the grey mouse, Rosabelle, at the dawn of morning, had resisted the strong impulse of her heart; and she distinctly heard a distant clock strike the hour of four. At that moment the little mouse, standing before her on its hind legs, addressed her as follows:—'Rosabelle, this is the hour of your birth; you are now fifteen, and you behold me plunged in despair at your not having committed the third fault, which was intended to entrap you, and to give me an eternal power over your fate; but now, in spite of my power, you are at liberty, and will yet be happy. Break this casket, and I will seek other victims for the years I am yet to languish in this degrading form. Adieu, for ever.' So saying, the mouse was lost to her sight; and Rosabelle, though in raptures at what had passed, feared to follow the advice she had received to break the crystal casket. While she was considering what to do, a huge hawk, which had been for some time hovering in the air, dropped a stone on the miraculous box, and broke it in a

thousand pieces ; from which flew a beautiful canary bird, who bid the astonished girl press the ground with her foot. She did as she was desired, and a tall white lily stood before her ; a sparrow now flew from the casket, and said, 'Rosabelle take the lily, and strike with it the blue stone you see by your side.' She, with a trembling hand obeyed, when a superb car appeared to her view ; then six May flies came out of the broken box, which were harnessed to the car, and the astonished Rosabelle was instructed to touch them also with her lily wand, when they were instantly changed into six eagles ; the harness of which was magnificent ; at last a fine parrot made its escape from the magic box, holding in its beak a lighted torch. 'Mistress,' said he, 'pluck from my head the seventh grey feather, which you will find at the right side of my ear. Rosabelle with eagerness tore it from his head, and the parrot was in a moment converted into a spruce coachman in a rich livery. He gave, without speaking, his hand to the wondering girl, whom he assisted to the carriage ; then taking the reins, she was instantly transported to the magnificent palace of her amiable prince. At the same time another car appeared advancing in the air towards her, from which three persons alighted. One was the good enchanter, who had been the friend of her father ; her eyes next rested on her captivating lover, who held the hand of her good and respectable parent ; he being now disenchanted, had come to partake of the good fortune in store for his beloved daughter. After some moments had been given to the raptures of such a meeting, the good enchanter spoke as follows :—'Rosabelle, receive from the hands of his father my son Paridel as your husband. The malice of the Fairy Maligna had robbed me of all my right over him ; but he obtained from a benevolent fairy a pomegranate, which was to enable him to fulfil all his wishes.

'She also predicted that he would find, sleeping in a wood, the woman who, by giving him her hand, would restore the privileges of his birth ; but our penetration did not foresee you would be greedy enough to eat this precious pomegranate, which had nearly deprived us of our rights for ever : but this, as well as the casket of crystal, was the work of

the wicked grey mouse ; and if you had been tempted to look at the talisman, you would most certainly have lost your sight, and have been transformed into a large caterpillar ; but by having at last sufficient fortitude to enable you to resist the curiosity with which she had so plentifully endowed you, the blessings of liberty are restored to your father, and his rights to my son, whose fate is united for ever with your own. Learn from the sufferings you have undergone, my child, never to give way to those desires, the gratification of which is forbidden by any person who has wisdom to command your actions ; and never seek for an explanation of any circumstance, their superior experience and understanding would keep from your knowledge : a contrary conduct, believe me, will ever bring all who are wicked enough to pursue it, into those difficulties you have so narrowly escaped, and render them objects to be pointed at and despised by the good and estimable part of society.'

It was thus the good fairy spoke, and, for many days after, nothing but balls and fêtes went forward at the palace, where all the fairies assisted at the wedding of Paridel and Rosabelle, charmed at the mortification which was inflicted by this happy event, on their unworthy sister the little grey mouse.

EVENING THE SECOND.

'WHERE is Henry?' said my grandmamma, on entering the comfortable little parlour, previous to the commencement of our evening's narration. My brother approached, and she requested to have the skein of silk which had been given him in the morning to wind. Henry, with a trembling hand, presented the good old lady a small ball, which he had made with so much haste, as rendered it nearly impossible, out of the hundred ends which offered themselves, to gain one piece of a sufficient length to form a needleful. 'How could you destroy my silk in this manner, child?' said our grandmother. 'Dear me, it was so difficult to dis-

entangle, and it broke so very often.' 'Yes, and you preferred totally spoiling that which I had entrusted to your care, rather than, by taking a little time, and having recourse to patience, acquitting yourself of the task in a manner that would have pleased me, and gained credit to yourself for your persevering industry ; but now, on the contrary, your impetuosity has totally spoiled my silk, and you have incurred my displeasure by so doing. I would wish you to learn, my dear boys, that by the exertion of a steady determination to accomplish whatever you undertake to perform, few are the circumstances in which you will meet a disappointment ; but listen with attention to the history I am going to repeat, of a dutiful child who had a much more arduous task allotted to him than winding a hank of silk.

Story the Second.

LITTLE HENRY.

There was once a very good country woman, much such another, I have heard, as myself, though some years younger to be sure ; she having her own little sons, and not those of her daughter, to live with her, as I have, in a neat little quiet cottage, which was situated at the foot of a very high mountain ; she was known in the village by the name of the ' Good Mother ;' and such in reality she was, being the kindest and most indulgent of parents. Her occupation was that of selling milk and eggs, by which means she procured a comfortable maintenance for herself and three boys, John, James, and Henry, the latter of whom, though only nine years of age, was lively, firm, persevering, and possessed of an uncommon share of courage. It happened this good woman was taken so ill that her life was despaired of, and as the disorder was feared to be infectious, the neighbours all deserted the worthy creature, fearing their own health might be sacrificed at the shrine of compassion ; so that no one remained by her bedside excepting the three distressed children, whose sobs and cries would have penetrated the most obdurate heart ; and who with bent knees, and their

little hands uplifted to heaven, entreated a life to be spared, so valuable as was that of their dear mother. 'My brother,' said John, 'is it not possible some good fairy may appear at our entreaty? We have often heard of the benevolent Mirmidonne, who is so humane that she listens to the complaints of all that are in want of her assistance. Suppose we call on her, and she perhaps may afford her pity to three helpless little ones, who tremble lest they should lose the only person on whom they could depend for support. Scarcely had these words escaped him, when they heard a great noise proceed from the chimney, and on looking round beheld a little woman, about as high as the leg of a chair, and as ragged as the skin of a bear; she walked on two knitting needles, which served as crutches, and, what was most singular, wore a little sword by her side in the true military style. 'What do you want of me?' said this singular being. The abashed children, after a moment's hesitation, replied, 'We know not, madam, who you are.' 'I am the fairy Mirmidonne, you was just now speaking of.' 'O! how delightful! (exclaimed they with transported voices) can it indeed be true, that you are that kind fairy of whom we have heard so many good actions recounted; and will you restore to us that dear mamma, who lies dying on yonder bed? for should she be taken from us, there is no one living who will be kind to James, little Henry, and myself.' 'My dears (said the fairy, approaching the bed, and shaking her little head as she spoke), that good woman is most certainly in great danger, and will in all probability not outlive a quarter of an hour (the sobs of the disconsolate children prevented her proceeding, and the humane fairy endeavoured to soothe and console their despairing hearts) listen,' continued she, 'to what I am about to say: in the present situation of your lamented mother, I perceive the work of the Fairy Raquette, the most wicked and obdurate of the whole sisterhood. Your mother has, in all probability, spoken disrespectfully of her, and, to be revenged of this slight, she is now bringing her to the grave. I know but one method by which we can counteract her intentions, but it requires a considerable degree of courage to undertake the task, which one of you only

can accomplish, and, by so doing, restore the health of your mother, and destroy the power of her malicious foe !' 'Speak, you have only to inform us how we can be so happy, for we would each of us die to save our dear, dear mother.' 'Attend then, my good and dutiful boys, to the instructions I am about to give ; know that on the very summit of Rock Savage, which you see from hence, there grows a herb, which you will know from its having a leaf with four corners and of a bright lemon colour : the juice of this plant (are you fortunate enough to procure it) must be squeezed into the mouth of the invalid, when she will instantly become reanimated, and yet live a hundred years.' 'We will fly to execute this commission.' 'Wait a moment ; allow me to inform you, that it is not so easily accomplished as you may imagine ; the fairy Raquette will do all which lays in her power to prevent your reaching the top of the mountain, which you certainly never would be enabled to do without my assistance in your enterprise ; take this little sword, which is the width of three hairs, and the length of my little finger. He that has the most courage must wear this weapon, and it will counteract all the enchantments which will oppose his march ; but be very careful not to lose my gift, for should that be the case, I can no longer serve you, and it would be useless again to call upon me. Adieu, my young friends, courage, patience, and perseverance are the virtues I recommend you to pursue.'

So saying, the little fairy broke a corner of the casement, and with the swiftness of a stag flew through its aperture. As soon as she had quitted the cottage, my brothers held a council—each was for undertaking the journey ; but it was John who obtained the preference ; and he departed, promising to return as speedily as possible with this miraculous plant. I forgot to mention that, before her departure, the kind-hearted fairy had breathed on the sick person in such a manner as would insure the prolongation of her existence to that moment 'when her sons should be either crowned with success, or baffled in attempts they had so dutifully undertaken to lengthen her days. In about an hour the anxious children, who had remained by the bedside of the

insensible mother, beheld John return, pale, terrified, and heated by exercise. He informed them it was impossible to proceed in his attempt, for that a dragon, who vomited flames of fire, would have devoured him had he endeavoured to pass; 'so here is the sword,' said he, handing it to his next brother, 'and do you try your resolution; for my part I must resign all further trial.' They both blamed their cowardly brother; and James said, that before evening he had no doubt he should return triumphant, and went off in high glee, but returned even more quickly than his brother had done, totally incapable of articulating; he threw himself on a chair almost without sense or motion; in fact a huge black cat had barred his passage, from whose throat issued a thousand little imps, which had so terrified James as to induce his immediate return; but not before he had given a proof of his courage, by plunging his little sword into the body of the frightful beast, which, to complete the measure of their misfortune, had failed to kill the animal, who fled with it sticking in its side: owing to which circumstance they had no longer any talisman by which they might hope to counteract the power of the wicked fairy, who would endeavour by every means to prevent their reaching the summit of the mountain; and the good Mirmidonne had warned them, should this misfortune occur, it would be needless for them to call again on her for assistance, as it would be impossible she could afford it to them. On the re-appearance of his second brother, little Henry exclaimed, 'I will undertake this arduous task, though deprived of all help, which, should I be successful (as something whispers me I shall), will restore our dearest mother to her unfortunate children, and this idea will of itself support me through every difficulty I may be doomed to encounter, in pursuit of this salutary medicine.' His less persevering brothers endeavoured to persuade him from the risk he would run, by representing in the most glowing colours all the horrors of that destruction which must surely await him, in an encounter with the dragon and the cat. 'Well, if they do kill me,' replied he, 'I shall at least be spared the grief of surviving to lament the loss of my dear, dear mother.'

It was in vain they made use of every remonstrance to deter him from adhering to his resolves. He now tore himself from their arms; and in spite of sobs and tears vowed never to return without proving successful in his researches. 'Of what use,' said he, 'could that sword be to me, when you found it did not even possess the qualities the most common weapon of its kind would have done, or it would not have failed to kill the beast when sticking in its side: no, I can have no need of such an assistant, and will only remember the motive I have for my exertions, and the last words uttered by our good friend the fairy—courage, patience, and perseverance: I have no occasion for any other help but that which fortitude will inspire; so adieu, my brothers.' And on the wings of filial duty, and supported by hope, he flew to execute a task, duty and affection had caused him to undertake. Scarcely had he come to the bottom of the mountain, whose towering summit appeared to threaten that bold mortal with destruction who should dare attempt exploring its mysteries, when he beheld a little old woman seated on a fragment of the rock; she held a racket in her hand, and a shuttlecock graced her headdress. Henry did not doubt but this must be the Fairy Raquette, the malicious foe of his parent. 'My friend,' said the tricking old woman, 'whither are you going in such haste?' 'On business of importance, madam.' 'And would you have the imprudence to attempt climbing the hill before you?' 'Undoubtedly, it is my intention immediately to do so; and I trust that I possess both perseverance and patience sufficient to get through a task I am most anxious to commence.' 'Listen to what I am going to say—I know that you are not even equipped with the talisman which the other urchins, who have already presented themselves at the foot of this mountain, possessed, and this it is which particularly interests me in your fate. I am the guardian of that plant you are in pursuit of; but I will not deceive you, and if you have address sufficient to undertake a commission of mine, I promise, on the word of a fairy, you shall proceed without molestation on my part.' 'And what is it, madam, you do me the honour to ask?' 'The task is so

difficult that I am almost convinced you will not attempt its execution.' 'Tell me, at least,' returned he with eagerness, 'and if its accomplishment be possible, assure yourself I will not shrink from the endeavour.' 'You must know, then, that I am extravagantly fond of a stew made of the eyes of ants; here is a large ant-hill close beside us, and I wish you to pick out the eyes of all its little inhabitants, and bring a dish of them sufficient for my dinner.'

Henry laughed at this ridiculous order of the fairy, who now disappeared, and strove to mount the hill before him; but an immense green baboon, bearing a pike of six hundred feet long, threatened to run him through with this horrible spit; he now considered that if possible he had better strive to oblige the fairy, and immediately set about catching the industrious colony of ants. Much as it hurt his feelings to be obliged to undertake so cruel a business, he had the patience to kill singly three millions, and taking out their eyes, put them in a plate of gold, which appeared to have been placed by enchantment at his side. This minute work occupied him for two days and as many nights, during which a most brilliant light shone from a pair of superb carbuncles, which ornamented the gold dish the fairy had sent for the deposit of her dainty regale. When this perplexing work was accomplished, he called on her, and she stood before him, enraged that such a child had resolution to overcome the difficulties she had thrown in his way; and snatching up her dish, she again left Henry to pursue his road. He continued on the ascent for about a mile, without having encountered any other difficulty. At length he saw, to the right, a lake, and before him a wall of brass of a prodigious height, and which appeared to encircle the whole mountain, in a manner which must preclude all possibility of his proceeding further. In this embarrassment he perceived a tower in the centre of the wall, and supposing it to be the habitation of the porter to this fortification, determined to knock at the door. He accordingly did so, and a voice within demanded 'Who was there?' 'Open the door, and you will see.' 'What is it you want?' 'To pass this wall.' 'That is impossible.' Henry, not intimidated by

this rebuff, continued to knock; but what was his surprise and terror at beholding a giant come out at the gate, who was at least thirty feet high. 'Who are you, little villain, that dares thus to interrupt my solitude; speak, and tell me what are your motives for so bold an action?' 'I will inform you, sir,' said the heroic child; 'my wish is to be allowed to pass this wall, on my way to the top of the mountain, whither I am going in pursuit of a yellow herb, which grows on its very summit.' The giant could not understand what he had said, owing to his head being so much above the mouth of the little speaker; so taking him in the palm of his hand, he raised him to a level with his ear. 'Your voice is so weak,' said he, 'that I can scarcely make out what you want; but it is, I believe, that I will allow you to pass my wall, and on one condition I will grant you permission to do so.' 'Name it then, dear sir, and do not doubt my readiness to undertake whatever you may be pleased to order.' 'Well, then, you must know that the most favourite dish I have are the minims which abound in yonder lake, and it takes a most prodigious quantity to make a fry sufficient for me, as my appetite is very good, and I wish for once to have as much as I can eat of so delicious a regale. Gain this for me, and I will let you proceed.'

After having caught with a hook and line all the little fish in that piece of water, which was a mile and a half in breadth: 'Dear sir, I much fear your orders are impracticable.' 'Well, then, you will remain, my boy, where you are at present; for I give you notice you cannot advance one step, neither will it be in your power to return, for the green baboon would swallow you up like a fresh egg.' The little hero was still undaunted, and immediately asked for some fishing-tackle. This was given him by the giant, who then retired within his stronghold; and Henry placed himself on the banks of the river, where he passed five months, eight days, five hours, three minutes and a half, in clearing the water of all the small fish, so ardently wished for by the gormandizing giant; nor, during the whole time he was thus engaged, did he feel the least inclination either to eat, drink, or sleep; nor was he uneasy respecting the life of his be-

loved parent; such implicit confidence did he repose in the good and benevolent fairy, on whose promise he depended to preserve her, till the termination of his journey should be known. When he had finished angling, he had caught seven million, forty-four thousand, three hundred and fifteen. This, thought he, will make a comfortable large dish for the glutton; and in the hope that he would be satisfied, he now called on the giant, who instantly obeyed his summons; and to convince himself no more fish remained in the river, he breathed upon it, and instantly the water ebbed, and the lake becoming dry, not a single fish appeared on its sands. The enraged giant marched off with his prey, and, in a moment, the walls of brass disappeared, and our traveller was no longer hindered from continuing his journey.

He had again proceeded some distance, and could plainly discern the place of his destination, when his progress was impeded by a new obstacle. A vast forest stood before him, fenced by a rail of iron, through which he could discover the thickets of briar and underwood which formed the carpet of this dismal retreat. His ears were saluted by the notes of various birds, which in numbers peopled a spot the most dreary to be imagined; and Henry continued to walk up and down, without being able to discover a place sufficiently large to admit his little person. Fatigued with his exertions, he seated himself on a stone, from whence he could perceive his own village; and amongst the scattered hamlet, his eager eye was fixed on the white chimney of the comfortable cottage in which he had first received life. 'My dear mother,' exclaimed he; 'all obstacles appeared removed, and now a greater trial than ever seems to threaten me. Perhaps you will at last be snatched from us; and it will be owing to me, who would resign my own life to save yours. Oh, dear and kind fairy, can you abandon me at such a moment?' Scarcely had he uttered these words, when he heard the roarings of a wolf; and, on turning round, saw in the interior of the forest a very furious one, who marched backward and forward before the iron railing. Henry approached. 'Ah!' said he, 'would this beast have the kindness to admit me, I should not fear him; on the contrary, I

could even caress and tame him by kindness.' 'And do you suppose I could be content with that mark of good will only?' returned the animal; 'know that I am the keeper of this forest, and can give you permission to pass through it, if you will oblige me in your turn.' 'Most certainly, if in my power to do so.' 'Well, then, you must know that I am the only beast in this wood which is filled with fowls, and birds of all sorts and colours, whom I would willingly eat; for I have been long confined to a vegetable diet, owing to these provoking birds, who are continually flying from one tree to another, and the swiftness of their motions puts it out of my power to catch them. I will give you a bow and arrow, and when you have killed, picked, and made them all ready for the spit (as I shall eat them roasted), I promise to conduct you on your right road.' Henry, notwithstanding the many difficulties attending it, accepted the proposition of the wolf, who opened the gate and introduced him to the forest; then equipping him with his death-inflicting weapons, retired from the field of action. Behold our little archer, unused to the management of the bow, laying at his feet birds of the most beautiful plumage; for the desire of saving a parent's life gave him patience to go on with his task, and address to accomplish it; so that, at the end of seven months, there was not a feathered inhabitant of the forest remaining, all having been destroyed, even to the nightingales and robins. The numbers were past calculation; and when he had picked and cleaned them, he requested the presence of the wolf, who instantly stood before him. 'Behold,' said he, 'that which will please your palate; and do you now keep your promise which you pledged to me.' The wolf growled, and the same moment the forest, the rails, and all disappeared from the sight of Henry, who could now discern the direct road to the top of Mount Savage. He now proceeded with inexpressible delight, thinking he had, by his indefatigable resolution, surmounted all the obstacles raised by the enchantment of the wicked fairy to turn him from his pursuit; but, alas! one yet remained, seemingly as difficult as the others had been. But this was to be the last trial of his fortitude, and of the power

of the malignant Raquette. On his having nearly reached the top of the hill, he perceived a most tremendous precipice, the depth of which it was impossible for the eye to fathom. The wearied spirits of our little hero almost gave way at this dreadful impediment; and again he wept, and bemoaned the loss of his mother; however, scarcely knowing what he did, he walked forward a few steps, and saw to his right a beautiful field of ripe corn, and on his left a vineyard, bending under the weight of its blushing treasures. He now seated himself beneath the luxuriant branches, and solicited the protection of heaven to release him from this terrible embarrassment. He was raised from so melancholy a reverie by something touching him on the shoulder, and on turning beheld a red parrot, whose wings, to judge from the length of his body, must at least extend six feet. 'I am,' said he, 'the guardian of this precipice; and, if you will oblige in your turn, you shall not be debarred a passage.' 'Most readily will I serve you.' 'Well, then, I must inform you that my most favourite food is bread soaked in wine; it is a mixture that I devour with much satisfaction; but here I can only procure the grain and fruit, without its being made palatable to me; but if you will convert the corn into bread, and the grapes into wine, I will take you on my back safe over the frightful gulph before us.'

Henry was for some time too much astonished to form any reply, thinking it next to impossible for him to do as the parrot wished; besides, were he to undertake the task, what a length of time there must be before it could be accomplished. 'Surely,' thought he, 'all these guardians are sad epicures,—eyes of ants, dishes of minims, and now they would convert me into a wine-dresser and a baker;' yet, hard as the task seemed, filial affection made him undertake it, and having agreed to make the trial, the bird quitted him; having first pointed out a small cottage, in which he was informed were all the materials necessary for his enterprise. The first thing he set about was to cut down the field of wheat, and then by his industry and patience, brought it to a state to be made into bread; neither was he less skilful in the vineyard, and, after seven months' indefatigable labour,

he called his employer, who visited him without delay. 'Behold,' said he, 'your cellars filled, and your cupboards stored; so now lend me your back to proceed on my expedition.' The parrot, whatever were his sentiments on the occasion, kissed the good boy, and landed him safely on the mountain's top. Henry's transport, on finding himself thus situated, was beyond all description; and in accents of transport he exclaimed, 'My dearest mother, your precious life will then be spared to us.' However, he was rather too sanguine in supposing he should so soon discover the plant; he sought it among the thousands of various kinds which covered the earth; and he was creeping in search of it, when he saw at a little distance the black cat that had so terrified his second brother. It was now dead, and the little sword, given to them by the kind-hearted fairy, yet stuck in its body: this he immediately possessed himself of, and felt inexpressible transports of delight at having recovered it. He now observed a large owl, who seemed to hide something with its wings. Henry approached, and fire and smoke proceeded from the bird; he immediately brandished his sword, and it quickly flew from his sight; in its room appeared a dwarf, of about six inches high, dressed in a black suit of clothes with a large flowing wig, which fell in curls round his shoulders, holding in one hand a cane, made of the beak of a crow, whilst in the other he regaled his little nose with a pinch of snuff. Henry rightly supposed he must be a physician, and, addressing him accordingly, requested he would have the goodness to point out the yellow plant, the pursuit of which had already cost him so much indefatigable labour and persevering patience. 'Take it,' replied he, giving him at the same time a pot of flowers, in which he really at last beheld the herb, which he knew by its leaf and colour: 'it is yours by right,' continued the dwarf, 'most amiable of children; the courage you have evinced, and the proofs given of the unbounded duty and affection you bear your good mother, have overcome all the enchantments of the wicked fairy who was her enemy. Go, carry it immediately to your mother, and inform the Fairy Mirmidonne that it was given you by the Genius of Botany, who is your most obedient

little servant.' The dwarf now disappeared beneath some medical plants, which covered this marvellous mountain. Delighted with the success of his journey, yet Henry could not be altogether insensible to the fatigues he had undergone. 'Oh!' exclaimed he, 'how happy should I be if I had a good horse who would carry me immediately home.' A gnat, who was flying about his nose, replied, 'Touch me with your sword.' Our little hero obeyed, and the fly instantly became transformed into a beautiful nag, who had wings at his head and feet. Henry mounted his courser, which might truly have been termed the flying nag, with such incredible swiftness did he cut the air, and in a moment he alighted in the little garden before the door of his mother's cottage. His astonished brothers, who from the window had witnessed his arrival, mixed a thousand inquiries with the welcome their hearts gave him, expecting he would instantly account for the length of time he had been absent; but instead of affording any gratification to their curiosity, he immediately demanded news of his beloved parent, and was by them informed she still continued in exactly the same state as when he quitted them, and would have appeared a perfect corpse, but for a gentle respiration which yet agitated her frame. They now entered the sick room, and the happy Henry had the inexpressible delight of beholding her rise from her bed, the moment after he had squeezed the juice of the yellow plant into her mouth, and enquire for her breakfast, saying she found herself extremely hungry. The good fairy now descended from the chimney, and recounted to the delighted mother all that her youngest son had undergone to preserve her valuable life.

The overjoyed parent, with tears of grateful pleasure, embraced her dutiful Henry, who, in his mother's caresses and recovered health, found a grateful recompense for all the perils of his journey to the summit of Mount Savage. But the fairy kindly thought he was deserving of the choicest favours fortune could heap on him; and determining herself to reward his filial tenderness, she drew a circle with her ring, and going into the middle of it, struck thrice with her

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tiny foot, muttering at the same time some words totally unintelligible to her astonished auditors, who instantaneously beheld their humble cottage transformed into a most elegant and commodious villa, well stocked with every article that could add to the ease and happiness of their future lives, which was preserved to a lengthened period; for the brothers of Henry, though endowed with less courage than himself, were not deemed unworthy to share the numerous blessings his heroic exertions brought his now happy family. By their having at first undertaken the dangerous crusade, they had evinced sentiments of filial piety similar to those that filled his breast, but without resolution or fortitude sufficient to pursue them, at the risk of the imminent danger by which they were threatened. Over the door of their happy mansion the traveller may yet discover, written in characters of gold, an inscription expressive of the duty, affection, courage, patience, and resignation, so strongly exemplified in the history of the persevering Henry.

EVENING THE THIRD.

My grandmamma found us all engaged in a high dispute, and every little voice extended to its highest tone. 'Why is all this chattering and noise?' said she on entering the room. I took upon myself the task of informer, telling her the quarrel was occasioned by Robert, who had served us in the vilest manner possible. 'Tell me what he has done, that I may judge of his fault, and punish him accordingly.' 'Well then, you know, grandmamma, that for this month past you have promised to buy him a plaything at the fair; and he always said to us, if you was so good as to buy him a Punch, as you had said you would, he should not look upon it as entirely his own, "because," said he, "I recollect you have all lent me your toys when I had none; for which reason it is but just you should play with the one I am to have, as often as myself; and we will share it equally between us." Well, after saying all this, you know that yesterday you brought from the town a most beautiful Punch; and I assure

you, grandmamma, he would not even let us look at it; and just now, because we reproached him for not having kept his word, he absolutely broke it to pieces; preferring rather to deprive himself of the amusement he would have with it, than to suffer us to share in his play.' My grandmother threw a very frowning look at Robert, and in a manner fully expressive of her displeasure said, 'Is it possible you can have conducted yourself in this dishonourable and ungentlemanlike manner? for you must well know it is a crime of the deepest die to forfeit your word in any one instance of life; and the child who, even in infancy, gives proofs of so despicable a disposition, is rarely, if ever, respected in society for the remainder of his life: for every person of integrity must despise a character, on whose word no dependence can be placed; it is a pledge so sacred, that the deposit ought not to be made without due reflection on the ties which bind us; but, if once given, no consideration should induce a forfeiture, and even at the risk of our lives the engagement should be fulfilled. But the history of the Great Bell-ringer will explain, better than I can do, the shame which is ever brought on persons who have neither principle nor delicacy to remember the promises they have entered into.'

Story the Third.

ARIELLE, OR THE GREAT BELL-RINGER.

There was a merchant who was extremely rich, but some affairs of consequence rendered it necessary he should undertake a long journey; and, being a widower with only one daughter, of whom he was extravagantly fond, he determined to make her the companion of his travels: she was uncommonly beautiful, and possessed many amiable qualities; but as few are without faults, she was vain, fickle, and inconstant in her attachments. Her father wished to see her well married, and had betrothed her hand to the son of an old and particular friend, whom they were to meet at their journey's end; and as the merchant travelled in a carriage

richly ornamented with gold, and carried with him besides a considerable quantity of riches; it occasioned him, one evening, to be attacked in the forest, through which they were to pass, by a banditti, who seized on every treasure they could find; and after wounding her father, spite of his tears and remonstrances, carried off the terrified Arielle; neither had her entreaties more effect, and she continued to tear her beautiful hair in frantic agony. They now took her to the thickest of the forest, and tied her to a tree, binding her hand and foot. She uttered exclamations of heart-rending terror. 'Oh!' cried she, 'if any worthy man would release me from my present misery, I would promise never to forsake him, but unite my fate to his for ever, let his situation be what it would.' At this moment the noise of dogs resounded through the woods, and the sound of horses' feet seemed fast approaching that spot to which she was so barbarously fastened: the robbers, thinking it was a party of huntsmen, trembled lest they should be discovered, and with haste quitted their poor terrified prisoner.

When they had left her, the noise that had caused their retreat seemed dying off, and Arielle again resigned herself to the sad certainty of being murdered on the return of so desperate a banditti. Tears had nearly obscured her sight, when she saw standing before her, a very tall, dark, ugly-looking man. 'Arielle,' said he, 'in me behold your deliverer, who am sent to share the happy fate you have promised the person that may be so fortunate as to save you from the terrible fate to which the robbers had exposed you.' 'And pray, sir, how did you become acquainted with this promise?' 'I know it, because I have the gift of a fairy, and it was I who made the forest resound with the cries of hounds, in order to divert those ruffians from their purpose.' While he was speaking, the cords, which bound the trembling girl, fell off, without any means having been made use of to release her, and once more she felt the inexpressible charm of liberty. 'Do me the honour to accept my arm, and return with me,' said her deliverer in a gallant tone. 'Ah sir! my father.' 'Fear not for him; you shall again be restored to each other, and you will see him rich and great.'

Arielle thinking it would be useless to oppose his will, availed herself of his offered support, and, during her walk, continued to observe her companion with the greatest attention; but her observations were not very favourable to his personal endowments, being at least six feet and-a-half in height, thin as a lath, black as a negro, and a profusion of lank, greasy hair falling over his eyes, which were sunk and squinting; his mouth did not exhibit one good tooth, and his hands bore a perfect resemblance to the feet of a goose. 'A wretch!' thought the fair Arielle; 'does he think I will marry such a monster? no, much rather would I have suffered death by the hands of the villains from whom he has rescued me.' They now entered a village, in which stood the habitation of her conductor; it consisted of only one chamber, and did not afford to her observation one agreeable or comfortable object. 'Ah!' murmured she in a low tone, 'surely, for a man who is gifted by the fairies, he is very ugly, very poor, and has a miserable habitation.' Her host made her sit down on a log of wood, and thus expressed himself:—'Arielle, I can perceive that neither myself nor my abode has inspired you with any great admiration or confidence; yet have I the vanity to believe I merit your esteem; nay, I will even go farther and say, your tenderness. A wicked fairy, who presided at my birth, is the cause of all the mortifications I labour under, by having reduced me to my present abject situation, which forces me to gain a maintenance by ringing the village bells; and it is this occupation which has caused me to be known by the appellation of the Great Bell-ringer; for the fairy power I possess in my own person does not go so far as to enable me to procure by it either money or any necessities of life; but one day you will learn more circumstances respecting those secrets it is not permitted me to reveal, and the principal causes for which I myself am ignorant of; in the meantime, condescend to remember your promise, and share this humble dwelling,' 'To what promise do you allude, sir?' 'Did you not vow to unite your own fate to that of the person who should be fortunate enough to deliver you from the perilous situation the robbers had placed you in?' 'It is

most certain I did; but can you suppose it possible I should now think such a procedure would be suitable to either of us?' 'I understand you; but if you will consent only to remain a few days with me, you may yet discover the disparity between us is not so great as you now conceive it to be.'

Arielle could not reply—her eyes, filled with tears, which the bell-ringer observing, hastened to wipe from her blooming cheeks. He now served her with milk, and various kinds of fruit, and appeared so kind and assiduous to procure her all the gratification in his power, that she soon ceased to regard him with disgust; and, before many days had elapsed, became so much more habituated to her host, that she now began to think it would vex her a little to be parted from him; and if, when on going out to his daily occupation of bell-ringing, and she remained alone in the humble cot, a wish to escape ever crossed her imagination, the conviction of the sorrow and distress such a step would occasion the kindest and most tender of friends, soon banished such an idea.

The bell-ringer could not be insensible to the rapid progress he was making in the affections of his fair visitor, and one morning, in the most respectful manner, requested he may be allowed to receive the blessing of her hand at the altar. Arielle no longer beheld the ugly and disgusting bell-ringer, who was now, in her sight, become both handsome and agreeable; for gratitude and affection embellish every object, and she replied, 'that having no longer any repugnance to fulfil the voluntary promise she had given, on one condition, she willingly agreed to become his wife; which was, that he would allow her to go and seek a father who must be so anxious respecting her present situation.' The poor man grew pale at a proposition so unfavourable to his wishes, and endeavoured to dissuade her from putting her project into execution; but Arielle persisted in commencing her journey that very day. 'You will forget me then,' said her kind preserver. 'Ah! my friend,' she replied, 'is it possible you can really harbour so unjust an idea of my heart?' 'Absence, dissipation, and the world, will oblite-

rate all recollection of him who loves you so tenderly; and never, I fear, will you return to me.' 'I pledge my most sacred word of honour that I will soon come back, and never leave this cottage, where I have experienced so much kindness, unaccompanied by my dear husband.' 'Remember, my Arielle, that on your fidelity depends my very existence; and if, through cruelty, you doom me to die, be assured your own guilty conscience will never cease to follow and upbraid your broken vow.' 'Believe me,' she smilingly replied, 'I will never doom myself to so unfortunate a destiny, for I again promise to return and marry you then; should I fail to fulfil my vows, I wish I may become as red as this cherry (taking up one that yet remained on the little table spread for breakfast); in short, that I may become the object of contempt and derision.' 'With this strong assurance I suffer you to leave me, and, in order that you may find your father with more ease, and, by so doing, return the sooner to your affianced husband, I will lend you this ring, which will ward off all danger, and procure the fulfilment of every wish your heart can form, whilst you have it on your finger; this is the most convincing proof of the tender light in which I regard you, by confiding the only talisman in my possession to the keeping of any other than myself, it being that alone which procures the gifts of the fairies; but I depend on your promise to restore it safely to me.' 'Doubt not, I will bring back this precious ring within a month, my dear friend, and again receive my vows of remaining faithful to you.' The bell-ringer, in the most respectful manner, kissed the hand of Arielle, and went to his daily work. She then put on her little chip hat, and commenced her journey; at length, fatigued with exercise, she thought of her ring, and wished for a carriage to convey her on the road: in a moment a very elegant one stood before her, and the driver requested to know her commands; she ordered him to carry her to the forest in which her father had been assassinated. On arriving there, no trace of him appeared, and she determined again to try the power of her magic ring, by wishing the equipage, servants, and all to disappear; convinced of its powerful effect, she wished to be

borne to the spot, wherever that might be, which her father inhabited; in a moment she was carried through the air, and found herself in a superb country house, where she desired to remain invisible till she knew what was going forward. A door being open, she plainly discovered her father seated by an old gentleman, and a very handsome youth, whom she did not remember ever to have seen. The merchant was in tears, and, turning towards his venerable companion, said, 'You are right, my friend, in thinking I shall never cease to lament the loss of that beloved daughter, who, had the ruffians spared her life, would this day have become the bride of your son Belamour.' 'Ah!' replied the graceful young man, 'by the portrait you have given me of that lovely creature, I adore her, and must die with grief at having been so cruelly deprived of calling her my wife; for, besides all the wealth both my father and myself possess, I have an aunt, who is a fairy, and can procure the accomplishment of all my wishes; and had I but the hand of Arielle, we would reside at my castle of white marble, and be the happiest pair on earth.' Overwhelmed with the sorrow of her father, and, above all, by the favourable impression Belamour had made on her heart, she now wished to become visible, and immediately was so, flying into the extended arms of the merchant. But it is impossible, my children, for me to do justice to this scene; suffice it to say, she was received with raptures of delight, and was herself so transported that she totally forgot her amiable preserver; and when recounting her escape from the banditti, if she mentioned him at all, she passed over in silence her promise of becoming his wife within a month. The merchant now presented Belamour to his child as her future husband. He was handsome, tender, and polite; and she fancied she should be far happier with him than it was possible to be in a union with her old friend, the bell-ringer, who once again appeared to her imagination as a perfect monster. This first sentiment of ingratitude was the effect of vanity, avarice, and ambition, Belamour having carried her to see his castle of white marble, richly ornamented with gold and the most precious diamonds; the beauty and magnificence of this superb building, when con-

trasted with the cottage of the poor bell-ringer, quickly made her forget the obligations which bound her to him, and she gave her promise to become the mistress of so much grandeur : but during the time preparations were making for their nuptials, she could not refrain sometimes, in the calm hours of solitude, thinking of him she would, by her dishonourable conduct, no doubt, condemn to the grave. But she again comforted herself by reflecting that, being no longer in possession of his magic ring, he must remain ignorant of her breach of faith: however, she at last determined that, when once married, she would send it back to him, with a civil letter of apology for her conduct. The wedding was accordingly celebrated in the most brilliant manner possible. When Arielle rang for her woman the next morning, she was surprised to behold her run with rapidity out of the room, covering her eyes with her hands, and uttering the most shocking cries. The astonished bride again summoned other servants, who quitted the room as abruptly as the former had done. 'What can ail them?' said she, rising from her bed, in order to discover the motive of such strange conduct. She beheld herself in the glass, and who can judge of the horror and astonishment she experienced on seeing herself as red as fire, and all her beauty gone! At a sight so horrible, she fell fainting on the floor; but no person appearing to her assistance, she recovered as well as she could. 'Ah!' said she, on seeing every part of her once lovely skin now become of the deepest flame colour, 'it is this vile ring I wear that has caused all my distress;' and she flung the pledge of the good bell-ringer's affection out of the window into a well under it, the water of which in a moment rose as if boiling on the fire. Having thus revenged herself, she went again to her bed, very much mortified at her change of person. After some consideration, she again called her terrified attendants, ordering them to close the windows of her apartment, and, above all, not to discover any change which might be observable in her person. The women obeyed, and gave out in the family that their lady was unwell and would not be disturbed.

Her kind husband endeavoured to prevail on her to have

some advice, but the room being quite dark, he could not perceive the horrible figure his bride made, who having now time for reflection, could not help calling to mind her late very ungrateful conduct to her preserver, and the last words he said to her. Her conscious guilt worked on her imagination so much, that she trembled with fear; at last, she fell asleep, and her waking thoughts still pursuing her, she dreamt that she saw the great bell-ringer tolling the bells, and at the time grinning at her in the most horrible manner. This made such an impression, that she could not avoid screaming out in her sleep, which awoke her husband, who, starting up, asked her in the most anxious manner what was the matter, supposing her to be very ill. Before she had time for recollection, she cried out, 'Oh, hide me! hide me! what shall I do! there is the great bell-ringer pulling the bells.' 'What do you mean, my dear?' replied her tender husband. 'I see no one.' But supposing that his wife might have heard the bells in the house ring, and that some villains might have got in for the purpose of plunder, called the servants, and with them searched every apartment throughout the house, but not finding anything, he returned to his chamber, and, in his haste and joy, to assure his sick lady that all was perfectly safe, forgot that she could not endure the least gleam of light, approached her with two candles burning in his hand, and at once beheld the unaccountable change in her lovely face. He flew out of the room exclaiming, 'Surely, some witch is in my apartment.' The half-distracted Arielle now remembered that at the moment she had pledged her word to become the wife of the great bell-ringer, she had wished, that should she be ever tempted to break her promise, she might become as scarlet as a cherry; every circumstance now recurred again to her memory. In the midst of her grief and remorse, she heard her husband approach, followed by numbers of their household; and to avoid those who had lately seen her so beautiful becoming the witnesses of her present shame, she made haste to dress herself, and opening a door which led to the garden, she flew through it into the fields, shutting the gate behind her. Bathed in tears, she entered a wood, when, seating herself on

the grass, she began to ruminate on her deplorable situation, but from this state of inaction she was raised by the din of bells, which was occasioned by a harmless shepherd, who was conducting his innocent flock at the early dawn to pasture. The leading sheep (as is commonly the case) having a bell tied round its neck, passed very near the place, where the guilty Arielle had seated herself, whose wounded conscience brought her dream fresh to her memory. She immediately fancied it had become a reality, and that she should next see the great bell-ringer grinning at her, as he had done in her sleep; she put her hands up to her eyes, exclaiming, 'Oh forgive me! forgive me!'

A little after, the noise having ceased, she ventured to look about her, the forest appeared a delightful spot, and she continued to walk she knew not whither. At the angle of a long green alley a lion stood before her, and she heard him exclaim, 'Perjured!' At this moment, the echoes resounded through the woods, 'Perjured! perjured!' A little further on a crow, who was perched on a tree, beheld her passing, and squalled out 'Unfaithful!' Again the echoes repeated the strain, and the words vibrated on her ear from every side. An adder now crossed her path, and as it crawled on, hissed out these mortifying words, 'Girl without honour!' and the babbling echo again became her accuser, for the sentence murmured through the trees.

'I have well merited this terrible fate,' sighed she, 'most certainly I have, for even objects the most abject in nature are furnished with a voice to upbraid me with having broke my promise, and this is a just punishment for my barbarity and ingratitude; and that precious ring,' continued she, 'on which his fate depended, and he so kindly and with such confidence entrusted to me, I have thrown it from me, and by so doing have put the finishing stroke to the misfortunes of one who loved me so truly; he is dead, and I am miserable and unfortunate for ever.' Towards evening she saw a little cottage, at the door of which she knocked, and an old woman came out, 'What would you have?' said she. 'Hospitality and shelter for a night.' 'My child, how red you look, what is the matter with you?' 'I have lately, good mother, re-

covered from the small-pox.' 'Oh! go away then, I beg it of you, as quick as possible, for I have children here, and I would not that they should catch it for the world.' She made a second attempt to gain admission at another hut. An old man came to her, to whom she gave the same account of herself as she had done to his neighbour. He would, at first, fain have got rid of her entreaties, but she was so importunate that he would receive her, that he at last consented, and after supper she retired to a little bed, where, being very much fatigued, she immediately fell asleep. But as an inward monitor never will suffer the guilty to rest, sleeping or waking, no sooner had she begun to slumber, but her perturbed mind represented to her the great bell-ringer, who, after upbraiding her for her ungrateful conduct, lifted up a large clapper of a bell, which he held in his hand as though he would dash her to atoms. She shrieked aloud, and her groans and sobs soon brought her host to her door, who, rapping loudly at it, ordered her to get up immediately. He then told her, her disturbed imagination had sufficiently informed him what a guilty wretch he had given shelter to; and that, was he to continue it one moment longer, he should dread the divine vengeance to fall on him. He therefore commanded her to quit his cottage immediately, or he should set his watch dog to show her the way out. The poor trembling girl obeyed without speaking, and though it was in the middle of the night, and the rain poured down in torrents, the old man immediately fastened the door after her without the least reluctance. She reached the most magnificent castle she had ever seen, in which there appeared to be nothing but rejoicings going forward. On looking through a window which was open, she beheld lustres of the most brilliant crystal, vases of alabaster and porphyry, from which exhaled the most fragrant perfumes; the finest mirrors hung round the apartments, and the outside of the castle was of the most beautiful white china, incrustated with gold, like those fine tea-cups your poor mother once sent me for a present. Every room resounded with the enlivening sounds of the most exquisite music. 'Ah!' thought she, 'how happy must be the owners of this superb

mansion. I have a great mind to ask if they will hire me as a servant ;' she accordingly knocked at the door, and an old lady appeared, very richly dressed. Arielle made known her wish, and the person replied, tossing her head with great dignity as she spoke, 'I cannot hire you in any other capacity than to wash dishes, and indeed I think that place is even too good for such a creature as you are ; but I have a vast deal of work to do, for my son was married to-day, and as there is a great entertainment given, if you will promise to be industrious, you may come in.' She agreed to all that was required, and was introduced to the other scullions in the kitchen. The master of the castle, followed by a concourse of his friends, all of whom were magnificently dressed, went to an arbour in the garden ; and the new servant, curious to see those she was now to serve, hid herself where she had an opportunity of observing all that passed without being herself noticed. She beheld in the bridegroom the most charming young man she had ever seen—a thousand times handsomer than Belamour, and whose manners were soft and gracious in the extreme. His bride sat beside him, dressed in robes of the purest white, and glittering with the finest diamonds. 'My friends,' said he, 'I have promised to relate my adventures, and am now about to commence the narrative. You know I am the son of the fairy Doucette, who is now with us ; the fairy Rubrique, whose power was superior to that possessed by my mother, took me from her at the moment of my birth, and, till I should attain the age of twenty, determined not to give me up ; but, wickedly, made me the bell-ringer of a little village church, and by her enchantments altered my appearance so much, that I was the most horrible object to be conceived. A ring of my mother's procured for me the gift of the fairies, but its influence only concerned my future destiny, without its having the power to improve my figure, or procure me riches, grandeur, or anything of the kind. A girl I once saved from destruction pleased me, and I thought I was loved by her, as she promised to marry me after her return from a journey. I was credulous enough to believe her word of honour, and confided my precious ring to her care, but she was perfidious

enough to forfeit her promise, and unite herself to Belamour, who is nephew to Rubrique, by which means I fell into the power of that malignant foe to our house, and for many days, without being really dead, I became a melancholy shadow.

‘At four o’clock this morning, my good mother came to seek me at my poor habitation in the village. “My son,” said she, “you are now twenty; the perfidious Arielle is punished; and I am at liberty to dispose of you’ according to my wish;” so saying, she restored me to my original form, and brought me to this castle, where she offered me the hand of her beautiful god-daughter, a gift too precious not to be received with transport: my mother alone knew the oracle which influenced my fate; and, while yet ignorant of it myself, she was acquainted with the ingratitude of her I once tenderly loved, and, in consequence, she conducted everything with so much wisdom, that I am now indebted to her for my present felicity.’ What, think you, became of the wretched girl, when she learned her elegant master was that very bell-ringer she had despised and betrayed? Unable to resist the violence of her remorse she cast herself at his feet, and conjured him with torrents of tears, to pardon her fault, and restore her lost beauty. ‘No,’ replied he, ‘perfidious Arielle, you well know how I adored you, and yet had the cruelty to deceive the honest heart which placed implicit confidence in you; no, I will never grant that boon which you solicit, for you abused my friendship, and threw away the talisman so valuable to me; and, as a just punishment for such base conduct, you will ever remain disgusting, as I at present behold you, a vagabond, and the object of universal disgrace; a fate so truly merited by ingrates, and those who are not bound by any ties of religion or honour, to fulfil the promises they have made.’ The unhappy Arielle, overpowered by the consciousness of her shame and disgrace, fell lifeless at the feet of her former lover and his fair bride. She had no sooner uttered her last sigh than a cloud of fire descended to consume her body—a just punishment of her ingratitude, and the breach of her word and promise so solemnly given.

EVENING THE FOURTH.

My grandmamma had already prepared herself for the commencement of our evening's amusement when the door opened and old Michael entered the room, muttering between his teeth, as he held his hat in one hand and twirled it about with the other. 'What do you want, Michael?' said his mistress. 'I beg, madam, you will give me my discharge.' 'For what, my good and faithful old friend, do you wish to quit my service? During these six and thirty years you have been in it, this is the first hint of the kind that has ever escaped you.' 'It is very true, and the reason for that was, that till now I have never been ill-treated or molested by either of my mistresses, who are ever kind and civil in their conduct to me.' 'Well, and have we altered our behaviour? for from that expression I am induced to suppose you have been offended.' 'Were I to complain, madam, you would not perhaps believe me, and in that case I should be even more vexed than I am at present.' 'Nay, now I must command you to speak, Michael.' 'In that case, madam, I must declare that Mr. Thomas, who sits there, has treated me with the greatest unkindness and incivility because I have endeavoured to hinder him from jumping on and off the new-made asparagus beds, calling me officious and impudent, and wondering at the assurance of a servant like me in pointing out rules of conduct to such a young gentleman as he is, though I must in justice to myself, madam, request you to believe, that out of the duty and respect I bear you I have at all times treated the young gentleman in the best manner my poor breeding would admit.' 'Thomas, come here this moment and make your excuses to Michael, for the very great impropriety you have fallen into.' 'But, my dear grandmamma——' 'I will hear nothing in extenuation of your fault; so do as I bid you immediately, and solicit my old servant's forgiveness, without which you will not obtain mine; and I would have you know, that a child like you is acting very much amiss, when he is rude and insulting to a worthy and respectable man who is old enough to be your

grandfather.' Thomas, obliged to obey, grumbled out some words which satisfied poor Michael, who retired after accepting the olive branch thus ungraciously held out; and my grandmamma having read my brother such a lecture as he merited on the pride and insolence of his behaviour, repeated the following story:—

Story the Fourth.

THE GREEN FAIRY.

THERE was once a very rich man who was named Goldmine, because he was in possession of such immense wealth, fine houses, lands, jewels, and plate, besides a number of servants, and everything which could mark his opulence and grandeur. His wife, as if to increase the number of his blessings, now presented him with a little son, beautiful as the god of love, and the happy parents had invited to be present at his birth all the fairies of their acquaintance. One endowed him with wit; another, with talents; a third, with fortune; and a fourth, with every personal endowment; but it sensibly pained his father to observe none of his good friends had spoken of the qualifications of his heart; he mentioned this circumstance, and they were all silent on the subject. 'Must he then be unworthy?' said the alarmed parent, who conjectured the worst from their silence. 'We cannot promise on that point,' at length they replied, 'for it is one of the mysteries of Providence, and out of our power to solve.' A sweet little musical voice was now heard, without any person being visible from whom it could proceed. 'Comfort yourselves, amiable parents, with the knowledge that your son shall not become wicked and unworthy; but know, though I give you this assurance, you must at the same time be informed that he will be so devoured with haughtiness and pride that, at the age of twenty, he will be regarded as an object of general dislike, should he not before that time of life pass through the different classes of society. This is his destiny, and I promise to make you acquainted with the time and place when his tasks are to begin.' The voice ceased, and the astonished

fairies began to question each other to whom the voice could belong ; each guessed differently and with equal unsuccess, but none had the power to oppose this fate, and they retired, after having promised Goldmine not to abandon their protégé.

The careful parent, in order to ensure the happiness of his son, by preventing the growth of that vice by which he had been threatened, determined, the more effectually to stop its progress, that he should be educated in the cottage of a peasant, without being informed that his real situation in life entitled him to any other advantages than those which his industry and labour would secure to him, hoping by this precaution to render him humble, gentle, and complying. Thus wisely reasoned his sensible father, who did not foresee that maternal tenderness would counteract the project which wisdom and true regard had pointed out as the only means to stifle the embers of pride from being kindled into a consuming fire in the bosom. The mother, anxious to behold a son from whom she had been separated for the last ten years, made, at the expiration of that time, a secret visit to the house of his nurse, and her embraces and caresses soon divulged that which had cost her husband so much trouble to keep from the knowledge of his son. 'It is terrible, my sweet love,' said the too indulgent mother, 'to see you thus plainly dressed, coarsely fed, and uncomfortably lodged, but above all does it distract my heart to behold my darling boy working like any ploughman, and I can no longer consent to this ridiculous plan being carried on, for great is the sacrifice already made in having for such a length of time deprived myself of the company of my dear and only child, who shall immediately be restored to his own situation in society.' This foolish mother did not recollect that, by the weakness of her own conduct, she was laying the foundation of his future unhappiness, for the moment he knew that he was the son of so rich and great a man, pride and vanity sprung up in his mind and stifled every tender and grateful emotion, and he quitted the good creatures who had reared him with a haughty air, which was intended to point out the distance his newly-discovered

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grandeur had placed between them. Goldmine was at first very angry on being made acquainted with the step taken by his wife ; but at length the pleasure which shone in the eyes of the delighted mother, and the affection he really felt for the little Loftus, made him overlook the errors which had destroyed his schemes, and I am sorry truth forces me to declare, that in a very short time he became as blindly indulgent as the mother he had so highly blamed.

Masters were now procured in every science, and a most splendid establishment appointed for the young heir, who made so rapid a progress in his studies that at fifteen he was a most accomplished youth, but so vain and rude that he looked with contempt on all around him whom he haughtily considered as inferior to himself—proud and arrogant to the servants and dependents, a word or look was sufficient for their dismissal—by which unpardonable conduct it is easy to be supposed he was detested by that rank in society who have the most undeniable claims on the consideration and kindness of those whose more fortunate situation in life gives them the opportunity of exercising that benevolence a good heart will ever evince towards those who by honest industry administer to our wants, and deprived of whose assistance the most exalted would find themselves placed in a very awkward dilemma ; for the different classes in society should ever consider themselves as bound to each other by acts of reciprocal kindness and mutual good offices. His mother, in the blindness of misjudging affection, approved of the most reprehensible actions ; but the more sensible father silently blamed the weakness which he now sincerely repented had ever been exercised towards his son, whom he could not but observe was each day more fully confirming the prediction of the invisible genius.

Things were in this state, and Loftus daily becoming more disgusting to those about him, by having like you, Mr. Thomas, insulted and ill-treated all the servants in his father's family, when one night, as Goldmine lay ruminating on the haughty spirit of his son, he heard the curtains of his bed gently drawn back, when a voice whispered softly in his ear—'The time is now arrived when you must give up for

the space of four years the society of your son, and to-morrow morning you must confide him to my care ; if not, I predict that a person he has insulted by his impertinence will kill him in a duel ; so make your election whether you prefer losing him for ever to resigning him to my charge for the limited space I have already mentioned.' 'But——' 'No buts, I entreat ; place confidence in me and grant my request, in which case I pledge myself he shall be safely restored, and his disposition changed to the most gentle, submissive, and amiable one possible to be desired by the heart of a parent.' The bed curtains were again closed, and he reflected during the night on the words of the mysterious visitor ; and not being yet quite determined thus to give up his son to the sole disposal of an unknown guardian, he early in the morning went to his apartment. Loftus still slept, and his father approached to awaken and give him some advice respecting the conduct which had rendered him so odious to all his acquaintance ; but on drawing near the bed, he perceived an open letter lying on a chair beside it, in which he read these words :—'To-morrow evening, sir, in the fields, I hope to blot out with your blood the stain which your haughty arrogance has brought against me.' Struck at the connection of this billet with the prediction of the fairy, the good man instantly determined to deliver up his son to the charge of his invisible friend ; he therefore bade him rise, and gave him a commission to his country-house, which was situated in the bosom of a forest about six miles distant, where he doubted not the fairy would meet and take possession of his prize. Loftus objected at first to the ride, as he feared the affair of honour he had upon his hands might interfere with such an excursion ; but at the earnest entreaties of his father, he at last agreed to go, having determined in his own mind to be back in time to keep the appointment with his antagonist. The worthy Goldmine now embraced his son, whilst tears started into his eyes as he recollected the length of time which would in all probability elapse before they should meet again : however the deprivation was for the advantage of his son, and he wisely determined to abide by his resolves.

And now, my dears, we will follow this young man through the different scenes of life in which it was ordained by the genius he should move, in the hope of eradicating that natural haughtiness of character which made him the object of universal disgust. Scarcely had he entered the thickets of the wood, when he was overtaken by a most tremendous storm, from the horror of which he sought refuge in a cavern, after having tied his horse to a neighbouring tree. He perceived with astonishment that a fine gooseberry bush grew within its recesses, the fruit of which looked so ripe and tempting, that to allay the thirst occasioned by his exercise, he plucked and began to eat them. At the instant that he had carried one to his parched lips, a man, black and ragged, appeared before him. 'Ungrateful wretch!' exclaimed he, 'I allowed you shelter in this cave, and you have rewarded my kindness by devouring my favourite gooseberry, but you shall suffer for this, depend on it.' 'Who are you,' cried the haughty youth, 'who dares thus approach me with so little respect?' 'That you will presently know,' said the ruffian-looking stranger, who, with a breath, instantly destroyed the cavern, and Loftus found himself in the most complete darkness, but the voice of his new acquaintance yet vibrated in his ear. 'I am the genius of the mines,' roared he, 'and to punish your gluttony in eating my fruit, I condemn you to work under the earth with me at hard labour.' 'I work in the mines!' cried the enraged Loftus, 'indeed I shall do no such thing.' 'Softly; learn you are at this moment under-ground, and never more shall behold the light of day till you have learnt submission to my orders; so give me your hand, and follow without fear.' Loftus now threatened to cut off the ears of his conductor, but as he was soon convinced all his threats would be useless, he, notwithstanding his pride, at last suffered this terrific monster to lead him where he would, and the air seemed to divide as if to afford a quicker passage through it. They now descended into a deep valley, and he was struck with horror and dismay at the volumes of thick smoke and flames of fire which issued from a hundred apertures of the surrounding rock, and to add to this terrific appearance, many streams of boiling water ran pouring from its sides the hot steam of which nearly deprived him of the

power of breathing. The terrified youth was now led into a subterranean cavern, which would have been dark as the grave but for the burning torches by which the miners could distinguish to dig out the iron ore, and the men thus employed were almost naked, and their skins so black that they had every appearance of infernals; women, with little children that looked more like imps, sat about in niches of the rock, boiling cauldrons of provisions for their husbands. 'Ah!' exclaimed the humbled boy on being introduced to his new abode, 'is it indeed my hard fate to be doomed to so mean and dirty an employ as digging iron in the mines? Never more, I fear, shall I behold my parents, who would certainly run distracted could they but conceive I was thus interred, while yet alive, in the bowels of the earth.'

He now seated himself in a corner, after having worked some time as hard as it was in his power to do. His task-master disappeared, and he was silently contemplating the terrific horrors of the scene. 'In this, Loftus, promise to obey me, and I will conduct you once more above ground.' 'Who are you?' 'I am your good genius, who have never quitted you since the first moment you drew breath, nor ever will do so, if you are submissive to my advice: but I must have your word of honour that you will not refuse to comply with anything I order you to do; without this, I cannot render you any service, for the smallest disobedience will put you again in the power of the genius of the iron mines, who is your most inveterate enemy, without having it again in my power to release you from his authority.' Loftus readily promised all that was desired of him, and he found himself gently raised by the hair, and his eyes were once more gratified by beholding the bright beams of a meridian sun. He found himself in a delightful country, glowing with the rich beauties of a summer's sky. During the time that he was returning thanks to his deliverer, he felt something touch his nose, and looking, beheld a beautiful little fly, green and transparent as an emerald, while its expanded wings seemed of the finest gauze; its body, legs, arms, and head, could have been contained in a nutshell, while its little eyes shone like two stars, and cast a

thousand bright rays about. 'Your good genius,' it said, 'has taken this form to be visible to you, for it is I who have watched and guarded you, and warned your parents of the destiny by which you were threatened; this induced your sensible father to bring you up at a distance from the place of his residence, and I need not, I suppose, add that it was I who have just now released you from the laborious and disgraceful office of a miner: do you now recollect the promise you have made me?' 'I do most certainly.' 'Well, then, I charge you, on no account whatever to suffer the monosyllable *no* ever to escape your mouth; for if you should be induced to make use of it, my protection is forfeited for ever; so be careful. I now warn you, that you are at the distance of two hundred miles from home, to which it is impossible you can return before a stated period, the termination of which is only known to myself: adieu, if you continue to follow my counsels, and avoid a word which will be fatal to you, I shall be ever near; and when you find yourself under any embarrassment, you have only to call upon, and you shall see me.'

The fairy now disappeared, and left Loftus in a state of great uneasiness, for he was so distant from his parents, in a strange country, deprived of money, and without even the common necessities of life: he stood for some moments to reflect, but seeing a large town at a distance, he determined to go on, in the hopes of reaching it before night. He had not proceeded far, when he observed a man ploughing in a field by the road side. Loftus, fainting with hunger and thirst, thought he might relieve his necessities, and walked towards him, requesting he would give him some drink out of the little wooden barrel which lay by a small bundle neatly tied up in a handkerchief, under the hedge: 'I will,' said the labourer, 'if you will plough a little, for I am very warm and tired.' 'Look, and see if I am fit to do such work,' said the still haughty boy. 'Ah! my friend, you need not however despise my work, it is that gives me the bread I eat, which is more, it should seem, than you are in possession of, with all your pride; however, do as you please, my boy, only say, yes or no, at once.' This brought to the

mind of Loftus that he was strictly forbidden to make use of the latter word, and he agreed to assist his new friend. When he had worked for some time, the labourer gave him his well-earned crust of bread, which he devoured with greater appetite than he had ever done the most dainty dishes at the table of his father; and after his frugal meal a carter called from the road, 'Here, you little fellow, I have some business with the man to whom you are talking there; will you drive my cart for me a little way, just to the next village? my name and direction are on it, and here is my whip.' 'Pray, for what do you take me?' said the mortified Loftus. 'Why, for no great thing, truly,' returned the carter, 'or you would not be dining under a hedge with Jem there; but I do not want to force you, so tell me, yes or no, for I am not fond of much talk.' The angry youth hastened to say yes, and drove the cart towards the place of its destination, which he entered after sunset: he immediately conducted the cart to the cottage the man had directed him to. A woman stood at the door washing; and being wearied and fatigued, he requested she would give him shelter for a night. 'I will,' said the woman, 'on condition that before bedtime you thresh all the corn in the barn, for my master is so taken up with doing other folk's work, that he has never a moment's time for his own.' 'But that will not be in my power, for if you look up at me, you will quickly perceive I was not intended for so mean an employment, though I did condescend to drive your nasty cart home; but believe me, I am not reduced so low as to become a servant.' 'Marry come up,' replied she, 'servants are a deal better off than such like as you; for if they be honest and industrious they can gain a good lodging and board, without being obliged to run about the country begging for both, as you did the very first moment I clapped my eyes upon you; however, please yourself, and say yes or no, in a minute, for I have no time to stand talking, not I.' With a blush of anger, which dyed his cheeks with crimson, he replied that he would endeavour to obey her orders; and by the time the carter was returned, and the supper ready, the grain was threshed and put into the granary. On the morrow

he took his leave, requesting an address to the mayor of the next town, 'for I have talents,' thought he, 'and wish to exert them, in hope of gaining money enough to convey me once more to the house of my parents.' Full of this idea, he proceeded to the abode of the chief magistrate, but this man was both capricious and unfeeling; and said to him, 'I dislike to give any encouragement to strangers and vagabonds, like yourself, whom I always contrive to get rid of as soon as possible, either by having them whipped out of the town, or committing them at once to bridewell; but if you execute a commission for me, which numbers have undertaken but could never succeed in, I will become your friend. You must know that for many years I have contracted for cleansing the drains and common sewers of this town, but it is so filthy an employment that I cannot bear to set any of its inhabitants on the work, which if you choose to commence, you shall be well paid; if not, I will instantly commit you to the house of correction as a rogue and a vagabond.' 'Think you, sir, that a man of my consequence will undertake so despicable an office?' 'Consequence indeed!' said the enraged magistrate, 'I shall begin to think so great a gentleman is fit only to be sent to Bedlam; however, since you are so scrupulous, I have only one word more to say: will you, or will you not, consent to undertake the work I have mentioned?' The trembling Loftus recollected the promise he had given, and the penalty which its forfeiture would cost him; and without further hesitation agreed to undertake the disgusting business. Behold him now, furnished with all the implements for his work, in the midst of the most loathsome filth, the smell of which had nearly suffocated the elegant youth, who had been reared in all the luxurious indolence of high life, and his fine figure nearly covered with the black mud he was employed to dig out.

Notwithstanding his utmost exertions, he got on but slowly in his work, and was almost expiring with fatigue and disgust, when he recollected his good genius had given him permission that he might call upon her in his greatest embarrassments; and he conceived it impossible that any circumstance could ever arise more truly difficult for him to

accomplish: accordingly, he requested the appearance of his elegant friend, the Green Fly, who immediately obeyed his summons. 'Indeed,' cried the poor youth, 'I have, as you well know, submitted strictly to the law you have imposed, but I confess this work is so hard and dirty that, unless you kindly assist me, I fear I shall never get through with it.' 'Say no more on the subject; you shall have help—holloa! come hither, all you toads and frogs, immediately.' In an instant, innumerable quantities of those reptiles crept from the ditches, which for above a hundred years they had quietly inhabited, each of which held a little shovel in its right paw; and, in obedience to the orders given by the fairy, worked with such persevering industry that the gutters soon became perfectly clean.

The pleased young man now went to the mayor, who, perfectly satisfied with the proof he had thus given of his abilities in that line, sent him with a letter of introduction to an army contractor, a particular friend of his, who furnished government with the clothing for many regiments on foreign service. This gentleman told the mortified Loftus that he must insist upon his making a hundred pairs of shoes by the next day, or he should lose the orders of a general officer whom it would be his ruin to disoblige. It was impossible for him to refuse making the attempt at least; and he sat himself down to the task allotted, depending on his friend the fairy for assistance, who, on being called upon by her favourite, immediately appeared, ordering two hundred rats, who understood the trade, immediately to set to work; and by the appointed time the once haughty Loftus waited on the army contractor with his order completely executed. It had been given only in the hope that the impossibility of its execution would have relieved him from the weight of having an idle youth hanging about his house, to whom, from the recommendation of his friend the mayor, he thought it right to offer some employ. 'You are a very singular youth,' said this great man in his own imagination, 'and since you are so clever, I will give you a second order, as a proof of my approbation of the facility with which you have executed my first; know then, I expect you will, in the course of two days,

bring me a year's complete clothing for the same regiment for which you have already made the shoes; the articles of which consist in shirts, coats, and hats.'

The new tailor promised all, and again had recourse to his good friend the Green Fly, who kindly established so large a workshop that, by the appointed time all was finished. A million of swallows stitched up the jackets; as many spiders completed the shirts; and an obliging party of beavers, who had emigrated to this country on some disturbance having broken out in the government of their own, furnished the hats. When all was finished, our friend waited once more on the contractor, who was so delighted with him that he was sent with the strongest recommendation to a friend of his, who was governor of an island so singular that its only produce was stones, for not a tree grew upon it, neither was it enriched by any mines; and its barrenness had, of course, prevented any mechanics or artificers from settling there, so that he was employed for two whole years in the laborious offices of carpenter, joiner, smith, and mason; and in every one of these employments, through the assistance of the Green Fly, he was able to succeed. And now that necessity had made him exert his abilities in so many occupations, which were at first considered by him as highly degrading, he became mellowed by misfortune; and, inured to obedience, he had from experience learnt the kindness due to inferiors, for never yet had he uttered the forbidden word *no*. He assisted the poor as much as was in his power, was kind to those under his command to learn the different branches which he taught, and worked like a horse, refusing nothing that he was ordered to perform.

The term of this trial being ended, his good genius had only one other proof to put him to, and this she determined should be as difficult to accomplish as the others had been. 'It is now time,' said the Green Fly one day to him, 'that I restore you to your parents, and your country. I am well satisfied with you; it is with pleasure I observe all that haughtiness of character, which was once so visible, is conquered, and you are now become gentle, docile, and laborious, by which change you will yet disappoint the malignant

genius of the mines, who has been waiting with anxiety to confine you once more in his subterraneous cavern. Listen to what I say : to-morrow a vessel will arrive, which will re-conduct you to England.' The Fly disappeared, and Loftus embarked at the appointed time. He was now beloved by all those from whom he was separated, who beheld him depart with sorrow, while the companions of his voyage, short as it was, became attached to his virtues and good qualities. You will doubtless be surprised at this, but, my children, it was no longer the haughty, insolent young man, who regarded everybody as beneath his notice; no, he was now the most gentle, polite, and conciliating of his sex, so much had his disposition been improved by the difficulties and hardships he had gone through. When he landed from the ship, the good little Fly paid him another visit. 'I shall be obliged,' it said, 'to absent myself for some time; take the straight road before you, and do not forget that you are still forbid to utter *no*, but must continue to comply with whatever may be required of you, a command which, should you neglect to execute, destruction will await you; so be careful, and I yet trust you will reap the reward so well earned by your industry and patient labour.

His friend now left him, and the pensive Loftus pursued his journey, on which he had gone but a little way when he perceived seated on a grass bank by the road side a poor old blind man covered with rags, who in a clamorous manner asked charity of the stranger, whose step on the gravel vibrated on his ear. 'Ah! good compassionate soul,' said he, 'I am totally dark, take pity on me.' He immediately dropped into the extended hat as much money as he could spare; the old man on receiving this mark of his beneficence exclaimed, 'Ah! kind Christian, I have lost my faithful dog, who has for many years past guided my trembling limbs—condescend to lead me on a little way, or I shall perhaps perish in this unfrequented spot, without a creature near me.' 'Is it possible,' whispered the voice of pride, 'that I can stoop so low as to lead about a blind beggar?' While this inhuman and proud idea crossed his mind, he heard a noise under ground, and the earth beneath his feet shook, as if

about to divide, and swallow him up. He shuddered with horror at the supposition that as a punishment for his hesitating to comply with the calls of humanity he was perhaps likely again to fall into the hands of the cruel genius of the iron mines, and he hastened to assure the blind man of his readiness to assist him. 'Come, poor fellow,' said he in a kind tone, 'I will replace your lost dog till you can find some other to suit you.'

It is impossible to describe, my dears, the hardships he underwent during the ten months that he conducted his travelling companion from door to door, begging their bread, and sleeping on the damp ground. The once handsome youth was now become a perfect skeleton with the poor food charity afforded ; at length, one evening, the old man, who was of a very peevish obstinate disposition, determined on sleeping in a miserable old ruined stable, into which they had crept for shelter from a storm; and as Loftus had uniformly complied with all the caprices of his tiresome charge, he made the old man as comfortable a bed as he could do with some straw which lay scattered in a corner, and creeping into the remains of a rack, which served as a sort of cradle for himself, the loud snoring of the blind beggar soon made him forget his own sorrows. On his awaking in the morning, and having rubbed his eyes, he no longer beheld the poor mendicant, but in his place a beautiful young person, who was burning perfumes of the finest odours, and was habited in a dress of the purest white, thickly scattered with leaves of roses ; and instead of the old stable, he recognised the well remembered objects in his father's house, who, together with his mother, alternately folded him to their bosoms, and overpowered him with their caresses. 'What enchantment can have produced this extreme of happiness?' exclaimed he ; at the same instant his green friend appeared, saying, 'The time of your trial is concluded, for this day you have completed your twentieth year, and according to the destiny foretold have experienced all the changes of life, in the various capacities of miner, labourer, shoemaker, tailor, hatter, joiner, carpenter, and, to sum up the whole, the patient conductor of a blind beggar; but know, my

child, the last object of your benevolent attention was myself, who took upon me that form; and I trembled during the time your hesitation caused me to fear the possibility of your again falling into the hands of your cruel enemy, who at the last moment of your trial endeavoured to draw you into the nets he had so long spread to entrap you ; but this snare was broken by your having rose superior to his attempts, by which means you are no longer the victim of haughty insolence, a vice so odious in itself as to render its possessor despised and detested by mankind, but every particle of which is now banished your bosom for ever ; and you will be both rich and happy if you unite your fate with that of the young person before you, who is my niece; and I shall quit my present form and ever continue to watch over you, in order to prevent a relapse into those errors to which your youth was so prone.'

The Fly disappeared, and in its place they beheld a beautiful young man, whose forehead was encircled by a bandeau of the most brilliant stars ; this, it is needless to add, was the good genius of Loftus, who for the remainder of his life never quitted him a moment, and the effects of whose influence were visible in his every action; for he made the most affectionate of husbands, a dutiful son, a tender parent, the kindest master, and the steadiest of friends ; and became, as he now deserved to be, adored by his family, and respected by every rank in society.

In this example you see, my children, that pride can be humbled, punished and corrected: but besides this truth, my little history evinces, that there is nothing which a man may not perform in order to gain an honest livelihood, if he be but blessed with health and activity, though deprived of all assistance, far from his friends, and obliged to depend on the caprice of strangers.

EVENING THE FIFTH.

THIS evening we saw our grandmamma enter with her clean white apron full of gingerbread. I cannot describe how our

eyes sparkled as she began to distribute it amongst us seven, James being omitted in the division. 'I have none for you, sir,' said she, 'because you have been so naughty.' 'Dear grandmamma——' 'Yes, yes, I know very well that in your ill humour you have this day pinched Adolphus, kicked Thomas, and beat like a demon poor little Francis, who you well know is not so strong as yourself. But this inequality of temper must be checked, or you will grow up with caprices which must render you disgusting to society; and if you lose me, as you already have had the misfortune to do your papa, who do you think will be troubled with you? for your mamma, you know, is at a great distance, and no one will like to live with a little boy who is so violent and ill tempered; the fact is, that you would shortly be turned out on the world to get a living as you could; but henceforward learn that to be good, mild, and gentle are qualifications which will ever cause you a kind reception from the world in general. I am now about to recount a story on this subject, of two little Orphan Boys, who, without fortune or friends, by their sweetness of disposition made themselves the objects of universal kindness.

STORY THE EIGHTH.

THE HISTORY OF GOOD DAY AND GOOD NIGHT.

There was once a little boy who was called Good Day, and who had a brother named Good Night, a fairy having bestowed on them these singular appellations, in the intention which will be hereafter explained. At nine years old they had the misfortune to lose their mother, the sole protector fate had left them, and they became orphans and very poor; but nature had been bountiful in having endowed them with most beautiful persons, and such amiable and endearing dispositions, that it was impossible they should not make friends, and the means of gaining future support. On finding themselves thus left to the mercy of an unpitiful world, they shed many tears, but the sensible little Good

Day, taking the hand of his brother, said, 'We both well know crying will not relieve our wants, and my advice is that we dry our eyes and immediately enter into the world, there to seek out some good soul who will afford us bread as the recompense for our labour; for you know, my dear brother, we have now only our own hands on which we can depend for a maintenance, since we are deprived by death of our dear mother, and have no other friend on earth, so that it behoves us to endeavour by our good conduct to make some hearts attached to us: let us go and seek our fortune.' The little boy followed this example so properly set before him, and hand in hand they proceeded, in the intention of reaching a large town at some distance from their own quiet village. They walked on for some time without stopping, till they came to a large common, by the side of which they observed with delight a comfortable looking farm-house, which, as they approached, a man came out of, saying, 'Good day to you, my friend.' The little traveller who bore that name ran quickly to him, and said, 'Sir, did you call me?' 'Pray what think ye I should want with such a vagabond as you are?' 'I beg your pardon, but I thought, sir, you called me back; we hoped you would have been good enough to have afforded us some bread and milk, for we are very hungry and tired.' 'Not I truly; I should have enough to do to feed all the little runabouts who beg at my door, so go about your business immediately, I say, or I shall see how you like this laid about your shoulders,' smacking a great horsewhip as he spoke, and he rudely shut the door in the face of Good Day, who taking his little brother by the hand, they wept together at the barbarous cruelty of the farmer.

Towards the close of the day our interesting children saw to their right a very pretty country-house, which from its appearance was the residence of opulence and luxury; and overcome with hunger and fatigue, after a consultation, they agreed to knock at the door, and request the favour of a night's lodging in the stable. While they hesitated about taking so great a liberty, a very elegant-looking man came to the door, following a friend who appeared to be taking

his leave; he had gone but a few steps, when the person who seemed the master of the house said, 'To-morrow, remember to-morrow—good night.' The little Good Night, thinking he was called upon, ran towards him, saying 'Here I am, sir.' 'What want you with me, boy?' 'Did you not call me, sir?' 'Call you? for what I wonder should I give myself so much trouble?' 'Ah, sir! we are two poor little orphan children, who have not an asylum in which we can get a bed even for a single night; will you have the kindness to grant us one in some of your out-houses?' 'Oh yes! truly, and by so doing harbour all the thieves in the country; no, no, the times are too hard for that, and besides I pay so large a sum to the poor-rates, that were I to give any more away than I am obliged to do, I should be soon ruined, and forced to go to jail, like the great farmer by the side of the common, who I have just heard was removed for debt about two hours ago to the county prison.' 'I wonder if you mean, sir, that cross man we saw in the morning?' 'I know not truly, but if you did see him, in all likelihood it is for the last time, for I believe he will never get out of confinement again; so now I desire you will march off, for I have other things to do besides wasting my time in talking to you.' The gentleman went in, and the tired little Good Night exclaimed, 'Ah! brother, how very cross and cruel great gentlemen are.' Having now no prospect of being received under any roof for the approaching night, our little friends, after having said their prayers, stretched themselves on the grass, supperless, and without any other covering than the wide canopy of heaven. During the sweet sleep which soon overpowered the heart-broken little beings each separately dreamt the same dream: it seemed as if the good fairy who presided at their births had come to visit them, blazing in gold and precious stones, and that in the kindest tones she said, 'My dear children, be always good, docile, and sweet-tempered, as you are at present, and you will soon see happiness follow those who show humanity to you, and ill-luck betide all who treat you with inhumanity and unkindness.' At the first dawn of day the two little boys communicated their dreams to each other, and astonished at

the similarity of their thoughts, they determined strictly to adhere to the good advice the amiable fairy had favoured them with.

After shaking off the heavy dew from their coats, which had fallen on them during the night, they proceeded on their route; but not having taken any nourishment since they quitted home, they both felt weak and exhausted, and notwithstanding the rebuffs they had already received, once more determined to solicit some refreshment of a woman they saw making butter at the door of a neat though poor-looking cottage. 'Your servant, good mother,' said the eldest boy, taking off his hat as he spoke. 'Good morning, my children,' returned she, 'do you want anything of me?' 'Ah! if you would be so very good as to give us a bit of bread and a drop of milk, it would save our lives, indeed it would.' 'That I will, with all my heart, poor little creatures!' said she, leaving off her churning; 'they must be unfeeling indeed who can refuse to feed the hungry, or show compassion to the unfortunate; and I trust I shall never live to possess such inhuman notions, as the master of that fine house to the right of you: however, he is dead, and one should not speak ill of those who are gone to deliver up their accounts to Him who can only judge of our actions; for he was barbarously murdered last night.' 'Who did you say was killed, madam?' 'Why, the master of yon fine house, I tell you; some one shot him and he is dead, I just now heard.' 'Dear me! I am sorry for him, poor gentleman, for we saw and spoke to him late last night.' 'It may be so, but you will do so no more, and he is no loss either; for, as I have said before, he was never known to give assistance to those who were in any distress.' 'And are you, pray, the mistress of this cottage?' 'No, my dear, I am only the servant to a man ——' 'Who must be good, indeed, if he is like you.' 'Ah! my master, bless him, is Virtue in a human form, for he lends to all who appear to him to want his aid, and is never repaid by anybody. It was but a little while ago he was in possession of a large farm, well stocked with plenty of every thing, but owing to men who bought his goods, and never paid him for them, he

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was forced to contract his business and come and live at this cottage, where he is very contented, notwithstanding all his troubles—but here he comes; observe how pensive he looks.’ The farmer now joined them, and commended his house-keeper for her humanity to the little ones, who soon related their simple tale, delighted at the benevolence they found under his humble roof. ‘One of you,’ said this good man, ‘can render me a service by watching my little flock of sheep which are grazing on the mountains.’ The little Good Night agreed with pleasure to take the charge on himself, and his new master bade him return in the evening, and drive home his flock to their fold, when he should have a good supper and a comfortable bed, as well as his brother, for whom he had employment at home. Accordingly, they separated to follow their different occupations; and the eldest little boy was assisting in the farmyard, when a man on horseback rode in, and enquired of the old woman if her master was within. ‘Yes, what do you please to want with him?’ ‘Tell him I am come to pay the ten pounds I owe him.’ ‘Thank you, sir, I am sure he will be glad to see you.’ The good old man joyfully received his money, which he had hardly deposited in his bureau when another stranger entered the kitchen: ‘Where is your master?’ ‘I will call him in a moment, but who shall I say wants him?’ ‘Tell him I was going by, and so have called to pay the fifty pounds I have owed him so long.’ ‘How wonderful this is,’ muttered the old woman. The astonished farmer was greatly pleased at this debt being paid, having in his own mind totally given it up, because he had often solicited for only a quarter of it, which he never till then had been fortunate enough to obtain; and with a lightened heart he returned to the poultry court, which he had left Good Day cleaning out. ‘What a prodigy!’ exclaimed he, ‘my hens have all laid to-day, and though I have twelve of them, they have not produced four eggs between them all for the last fortnight; and I see the old sow has also brought a litter of fourteen fine little pigs; surely, this has been a lucky day to me, and I declare, added to all the rest, my cow (looking over a gate in a little field) has just brought two fine calves;

surely, I am unworthy of such multiplied blessings.' The voice of Sarah was again heard, calling 'Sir, sir, come if you please, this moment, the corn merchant from town is now waiting in the parlour to pay you the two hundred pounds he owes you.' 'Ah! this cannot be true to be sure, for I well know he has not the cash to do it with.' 'Ah! but master, he is dressed in black, and says somebody belonging to him is dead, and has left him a power of money, so pray make haste and take it.' The farmer indeed received the amount of his account, and during the remainder of the day his debtors poured in as if they had all been summoned to do so; and, at the close of it, he once more found himself in comfortable circumstances. 'Surely,' exclaimed he, as his good heart expanded in gratitude to the Giver of all good, 'this is the most fortunate period of my life; some good angel has entered my house in the form of this little boy, to whom I owe my present prosperity.' He took the greatest care of the child, and, as the sun was setting, he beheld Good Night enter the yard, driving before him a vast number of sheep. 'Ah! my little fellow,' exclaimed he, 'you have mistaken; all these animals do not belong to me!' 'I do not know, sir, but I drove them home just as I found them.' 'You are wrong, I assure you; eight only of this flock belong to me, so the rest must be the property of another farmer who grazes on the hill.' 'I assure you,' said Good Night, 'I saw no others but these, which I took to be yours, from their all herding together.' 'But let us look them over,' said the farmer, 'for those belonging to me bear all a private mark, by which I cannot fail to discover my own.' He then began to do so, and counted out two hundred, all stamped with the initials of his name, and the pretty animals appeared ready to go into their evening folds as if used to the spot. The happy farmer could scarcely credit all the good fortune which had been thus showered upon him, and he now gave the children a good and plentiful supper.

Having done so, he took Good Night kindly by the hand, saying, 'Come with me, my little friend, I am going to give you a reward;' and, leading him to the cellar, he informed him it was there he had hid a little money, the only remain-

ing treasure which, till that day, his misfortunes had left him in possession of; 'and I am come to the determination,' said he, 'of dividing the half of it between you and your brother, out of gratitude for the good luck you have brought to my house.' He now began to search for the little bag in which he had placed his hard-earned money, but it was gone, and in its room he found a cask filled with money, diamonds, and other precious stones.

The astonished farmer no longer doubted that little Good Night was the child of some fairy, or protected by a good genius, who had thus poured riches on his house. 'Ah!' exclaimed he in a transport, 'how truly are yourself and brother named; one has procured me a day of blessings, the other a night equally fortunate; but we will now, my loves, retire, and in the morning you shall partake of those riches I have promised to divide with you.' He accordingly conducted them to a most comfortable bed; and when they went downstairs in the morning, they saw in conversation with their host a beautiful lady, magnificently habited in gold and diamonds. 'My children,' said she, 'I am the fairy who presided at your birth; you have no longer need to work, since you are under my immediate protection; and I now promise you every happiness; though, till the moment when you should find in the world a man who, without any other motive than what benevolence inspired, should receive and protect you, I was not allowed to assist you in your distress. But now you are happily possessed with the power of influencing the future fate of all who have treated you with kindness, as well as of those who had the inhumanity of refusing you the assistance you stood in need of. You already know the fate which has attended the farmer, and the more opulent master of this fine house, from whose inhospitable roof you were so cruelly driven to perish with cold and hunger: one is ruined, and the other fallen a victim to a lawless murderer; while this good and respectable man, who so generously received you, is now both rich and happy.

'I took care to call the eldest of the little ones Good Day, because the star which governed his birth proclaimed a

happy one for his benefactor ; and the youngest boy, our old friend can witness, has produced him a good night ; and now I have only to request that you, most amiable and respectable of men, will continue to live with these little ones, tranquil and happy ; and never forget, my dear young friends, that innocence, virtue, and gentleness will ever produce comfort and blessing to those who shelter and protect it ; or that the man must be blessed of those whose hand is stretched out to raise persecuted merit, foster suffering genius, and waft the sigh from the bosom struggling with poverty and oppression ; and in its stead has the delight of causing the smile of gratitude to illumine the countenance, and make the widow and the orphan's heart to sing for joy. Those who possess so rich a treasure will ever, without the assistance of fairy power, find their own reward in the delightful reflection of having had grace to improve the talent committed to their charge.'

EVENING THE SIXTH.

THIS evening the tailor brought home the new dresses with which we were annually furnished against the day of our village fair—a day of delight that was ever looked forward to with transport by the happy little group ; nor did we behold our new coats in the old-fashioned looking-glass, which adorned my grandmother's parlour, without strong sentiments of vanity rising in our infant minds : each one was in raptures with his finery, excepting only little Francis, who found a number of faults ; his coat was too tight, it did not sit well, and the colour was not such as he would have made choice of, had his grandmamma left it to him ; he pouted and threw his arms and legs about in such an ill-humour that he tore his little coat quite down one of the seams. My grandmamma was very angry at such conduct, and vowed that on the day of the fair he should be confined to the house, and not allowed to partake of the pleasure which was ever attendant on that jovial occasion. This threat occasioned many tears being shed by the mortified little culprit,

which, after some time, softened the kind heart of our indulgent parent, who, after having again reprimanded my brother as he deserved, told us the following story:—

Story the Sixth.

BELZAMINA ; OR, THE MAID WITH GREEN EYES.

There was, some time since, a very wise man, so wise indeed that there are at present none like him. He was a person of letters, and composed works of various descriptions, such as verses, stories, and plays, by which he amassed a very large fortune. A rich author, my children, is now a perfect phoenix in the literary world ; but in those days, you must know, the exertions of genius were properly appreciated, and the fairies were the first to enrich those persons of talents who dealt out, with a liberal hand, instruction and amusement at their table. The gentleman of whom I am speaking was called Head of Fire, and had for his most intimate friend the Fairy of Flowers, who bore that distinguishing appellation because she presided over the flowers of rhetoric. It had been predicted that the wife of this sensible man would die in giving birth to a little girl, nor could all the power of his friend avert the misfortune ; so that the unhappy husband, at the moment when his arms were extended to receive one blessing, had the grief to lament the loss of a tender and amiable wife. As the only solace his widowed heart was now capable of receiving, he entreated the Fairy of Flowers to grant his most ardent wish, and endow his motherless babe with all the perfections of his late wife. The kind fairy, taking the sweet unconscious infant in her arms, gave utterance to the following remarkable words :—‘ This girl is named Belzamina, and will be beautiful as the day ; but, as I am amenable to my own destiny, I must respect its decrees to others, but will avert, as much as possible, the woes with which it threatens individuals. For which reason truth forces me to declare, that your daughter will be vain, insolent, and overbearing till the moment arrives when she shall behold

the moon dance three times.' 'The moon dance !' interrupted Head of Fire; 'how is that possible, my dear fairy friend? But I see your reason for putting her change of disposition on such an improbable event; and from it I learn that I shall never behold my daughter amiable and gentle as I could wish her to be.' 'I did not intend you should understand me in this light; wait with patience the event, and you will see that this prediction is not so impossible and terrific as you now think. But adieu, my friend, I am obliged by the secret orders of my society to make the tour of the world a hundred times ere again I visit this spot; but you will some day behold me once more.' 'And have you then the cruelty to abandon me thus in my distress?' 'It must be so, and I again bid you farewell, but ever consider me as your true friend, and obedient little servant.' The fairy now made a curtsy and disappeared.

The good man was much embarrassed at finding himself thus left alone with his child, towards whom, from what he had heard of her future disposition, he did not feel any great degree of affection; but it was helpless, and the father could not withstand such a claimant on his protection; he therefore took home an old woman, who, he conceived, by her wisdom and example would assist him in counteracting the faults of her natural disposition. The little Belzamina, as she grew up, displayed all the charms of wit and beauty; but what was most extraordinary about her was, that her eyes were as green as the leaf of a tree; and this phenomenon, far from disfiguring, gave an inconceivable charm to her features. However, Head of Fire regretted that the absence of his friend the fairy deprived him of the opportunity of asking for an explanation of this singularity in her appearance. At length, like everybody else, he discovered that green eyes only served to make his daughter still more lovely than she could have been without them. Even during infancy were visible the bad disposition and habits with which the fairy had threatened her; for she was ever discontented and grumbling, violent in her little passions, and incapable of being worked on by the wise reasonings of her father, or the persuasions of her good governess; breaking

her toys when tired of them into a thousand pieces ; tearing and destroying her dress, if it was not exactly made according to her own orders. Punishments her little hardened heart regarded no more than it did gentle remonstrances.

One day that her papa had justly reproached her for some one of her many naughty actions, this little vixen, out of spite for having been reprov'd, though in a most affectionate manner, went into his library, and in a few moments destroyed all those valuable manuscripts which had occupied him for so many years. This was too heinous an offence to be supported with fortitude by her enraged father, who immediately placed her at a boarding school, under the care of a lady who was the most strict and severe of any who follow that useful occupation. She now began to exercise her tormenting temper, by teasing her companions in every possible manner, and they, to be revenged, would sometimes laugh at her green eyes. Belzamina on these occasions was perfectly frantic, and threatened to run away. One day, unfortunately for herself, she put her threats into execution. At this time she was about fourteen, and had been naughty enough to slap the gardener, kick the cook, and pinch the little servant who waited on the young ladies. On being informed of this terrible conduct, the governess determined to send her immediately home to her father, not wishing to retain so bad an example in her school. But Belzamina, on hearing her intentions, took her clothes, bundled up in her frock, and set off like a little mad girl, she knew not whither. When the tidings of her elopement were carried to her poor unhappy father, he was almost distracted at the proof she had thus given of her unrelenting and obstinate disposition ; and he now determined in his own mind to give up for ever this undutiful child.

The headstrong wanderer stopped in the midst of a thick wood to reflect on her melancholy situation, and once that her passions were becoming calm, and she was more susceptible of reasoning, she thought that she was the most unnatural of children ; and this dreadful but true idea caused the tear of sorrow and repentance to trickle down her blooming cheeks, and at that moment she determined

to return, without loss of time, to the respectable and safe asylum of a parent's roof, confess her faults, and entreat forgiveness of them; but her haughty proud spirit yet held dominion over her, and she hesitated on what part to take. In this undecided moment she fell into a deep and long sleep, and dreamt that she beheld before her a hollow place, which seemed splendidly illuminated, where she could distinguish many persons. On looking more intently she beheld a very handsome young man, who was weeping under some cypress trees; a tall figure, dressed in robes of the purest white, stood near him, who loudly exclaimed, 'Behold the good and handsome husband which Belzamina would have been blessed with, had she been a dutiful and obedient daughter.' The scene suddenly changed, and she now beheld pass before her a smiling and happy group of children, who were amusing themselves in the most agreeable manner, while their indulgent governess was regarding them with marks of approbation and delight. The same figure was beside them which had attended the elegant youth, and exclaimed, 'Look at these good and lovely children, happy and esteemed as they are by their parents and instructors would Belzamina have been, had she not so wickedly have run away from her good papa.' A third scene, but far more frightful than the former ones, was now exhibited to her view; it was a funeral, followed by a train of mourners, and the coffin was closely attended by the figure she had twice before noticed, and who uttered in a loud tone, 'Observe the state into which the undutiful and disobedient conduct of Belzamina has plunged her kind and affectionate father.' On beholding this last scene, the obdurate heart of his daughter was torn by the most acute pangs of guilt and remorse; and she would have cast herself into the hollow to have embraced the precious and lamented remains of her now beloved father, whom the funeral procession seemed to have already conveyed to its kindred dust; but the earth, at the moment she would have done so, closed, and all the objects which had presented themselves disappeared.

She immediately awoke, and exclaimed, 'My father, my beloved father; and is it I, your wretched daughter, who

by so wickedly flying from your kind protection, has thus caused your death? Ah! how justly am I punished for the abominable disposition which I shall now for ever repent having indulged; but I will return, and lay myself down to die on your grave.' So saying, notwithstanding the darkness which surrounded her, she wanted instantly to retrace her footsteps; but useless were her endeavours to find the path which would have led her from the woods; and the morning found her a victim to the most violent despair, without being able to extricate herself from the labyrinth in which she was certain some evil genius had enclosed her. She fell upon her knees, and solicited for protection and support, till she should once again be united to her father.

A little robin red-breast now approached her, saying, 'I would conduct you home, but that you would beat and use me ill for striving to serve you;' when the bird again retreated to its leafy bowers. A paroquet from the top of a high tree uttered these words:—'Belzamina, I should have been happy in becoming your little servant, had you been of a disposition less addicted to grumbling; but as I well know that to be your turn, do not count on my exerting myself in your favour.' The paroquet now disappeared, and a monkey walking towards her said, in a tone of raillery and contempt, 'I would have offered my arm to conduct you home, but that I know you to be of so ungrateful a nature, I should fear you would make me suffer for my civility; for which reason I have now the honour to wish you a very good morning;' and he capered into the woods, laughing at her distress. Belzamina exclaimed, 'And am I thus to be left a prey to this shocking inquietude? Oh! how unfortunate am I, and how truly do I deserve to be so.' As she pronounced these words she observed a tall fine-looking man, who stopt opposite to her, seeming to view her with a degree of interest. 'Sir,' said she, 'I entreat you will assist me; I am the most unnatural of children, having by the disobedience of my actions, occasioned, as I suppose, the death of my father; but for heaven's sake have the goodness to show me the way out of this forest, that I may weep over the grave of my dear parent.' 'The favour which you ask it is impossible for me to grant; I am the genius of this

forest, from which I cannot suffer you to depart; but assure yourself that your father is not dead; the dream which has made you imagine this dreadful event, has very justly opened your eyes to that which would have been the sequel, should your parent not find you some day restored to him, so totally changed as to be worthy of all the tenderness which has, till now, been wasted on an insensible and undutiful daughter.' 'Ah! tell me, I beseech you, what I can do, to be more worthy of such goodness, than I have already been?' 'Follow me, and be but submissive to the smallest wishes of my wife, and I will promise to be kind to you, and in the end restore you to the protection your own misconduct has forfeited; but it is right that I should forewarn you, that my wife, who is the fairy Croustellante, is a demon, and it requires the greatest sweetness and gentleness imaginable to live under her auspices; for she is old, ugly, and ill-natured to a degree; her own happiness consisting in rendering miserable all those who have the misfortune to approach her.' 'No, certainly,' replied Belzamina, with much discontent visible in her manner. 'I am not quite so vain as to suppose that I should be able to render myself pleasing to a lady of such a character.' 'Well, then, remain where you are, just as long as it suits you, fair maid with green eyes!' 'How insolent,' exclaimed she, on his abruptly quitting her, 'thus to reproach me with the colour of my eyes; but he shall find that I prefer rather to remain in this hideous forest, and be devoured by the wild beasts who inhabit it, to the alternative he so cruelly offers.' She then made several useless turns in the thickets of the wood, out of which she now found it impossible to escape. In this dilemma she saw a little page, elegantly dressed in blue, who was sweetly sleeping, reclined on a bank of grass. Belzamina contemplated him with looks of admiration and interest. 'How beautiful he is!' exclaimed she. 'Oh that I could be fortunate enough to have so engaging a conductor out of this leafy labyrinth!'

Full of the pleasing hope she took the liberty of awakening him, and requested his assistance to regain her path. The handsome little page looked at her, rubbed his eyes, looked again, then paid a thousand compliments to her beauty,

and politely expressed much regret that it was not in his power to accede to her wishes; 'for I am,' continued he, 'myself chained to this forest by an unknown power; but come to the palace of my father, and you will be received with as much kindness as if it were your own house. It is true that my mother-in-law, the fairy Croustellante, is not of the most amiable disposition; but ——' 'What, are you then the son of the genius with whom I have just been conversing?' 'Most certainly I am, but, unfortunately for me, he is married a second time; however, I am yet dear to him, and for my sake he will receive with kindness a beautiful young person, who is already beloved by me.' Belzamina reflected for some moments, but could not determine to live with the ill-natured old fairy, and consequently rejected the offer of the elegant page, who now quitted her, and, as he withdrew, laid his hand on his heart, vowing that he could adore her till death. During the time that she was indulging her grief for the loss of her new friend, she saw a lion approach, who placed at her feet a large necklace of the finest diamonds saying, 'This is a token of friendship from the gallant blue page.' She stooped to pick it up, and read these words engraven on the sparkling pledge, 'A good heart possesses the intrinsic purity of these gems.' A leopard succeeded the lion, and gave Belzamina a cestus, magnificently embroidered, which also came from her liberal admirer: on this was written, 'An amiable character is more desirable than riches.' The leopard was followed by a deer, who threw before her a cloak of black velvet, richly decorated with precious stones; and she read on this, 'True goodness ought to be inseparable from beauty.' Last of all a crow let fall from a tree on which it perched, a crown of roses; and the following inscription was legible round them. 'The brilliant colours of this blushing garland must soon fade, but their withered remains will long be visible: thus it is with beauty which quickly vanishes, but the qualities of the heart are durable. 'How kind and attentive,' said Belzamina, 'of the blue page, thus, in so charming a manner, to convey instruction by which I will, if possible, profit.' She now began to look over all the presents which had been sent her; and her

anxiety increased on reflecting that she was totally alone, and had no person to admire or envy her the possession of such rich donations.

Night came on, and she sorely repented not having followed the beautiful page, when he so politely solicited her company. While she was looking about for a path, she discerned a gleam of light at a very great distance; and the weary wanderer, thinking it proceeded from the cottage of some woodcutter, walked on towards the spot; but, on coming close, she perceived that it was a foolish fairy, who delighted in mischief, and laughed immoderately on seeing it had conducted her to a large pond of water, in which she was now plunged up to her neck; and it was in vain that she called out for succour and assistance: a frog was the first who replied, 'I will release you from this water, on condition that you serve the fairy Croustellante only for eight days.' 'No,' replied Belzamina, 'I cannot.' A toad raised its croaking tones, and said, 'Belzamina, this water shall instantly become changed for you into a bed of the finest down, if you will become the servant of our good mistress, the fairy Croustellante.' 'No,' again replied she, hastily. At last a little lizard, by the side of the bank, thus spoke: 'Listen, Belzamina, and learn, that on condition you will consent to marry the blue page you have seen, I will immediately transport you to a magnificent palace.' 'Oh! that I will immediately agree to,' exclaimed the delighted girl. 'But,' cried the frog, 'she is so unworthy, that such an union will render him miserable.' 'So violent,' croaked out the toad. 'So proud,' said the frog. 'I promise you,' interrupted she, 'that I will make as gentle and complying a little wife as any lamb can be.' 'But her destiny,' continued the frog, 'must first be accomplished; and I think it was foretold she should see the moon dance thrice before she would be good and happy.' 'But how is it possible,' said she, 'that I can behold so great a phenomenon?' 'That will however be accomplished if you are sincere in the vow you have made, of becoming the most submissive and tractable of your sex.' 'I call all the good fairies to witness to my sincerity.' 'Well, we shall see;' and at the same instant,

the frog plunged about in the water, and the moon, which shone brightly, seemed to the green eyes of Belzamina to jump and dance on its trembling surface; and suddenly the agitated girl, struck with the uncommon splendour by which she was surrounded, fainted, and on recovering found herself lying on a bed of roses, and standing by her side her father, the genius of the woods, the beautiful blue page, and a charming woman she did not recollect ever to have seen before. 'Your repentance,' said the stranger, 'has restored your eyes to a natural colour, and instead of green as they have been, they are now of heaven's own blue; in me you behold the Fairy of the Flowers, who was present at your birth; and it was I who formed all the enchantments which astonished you in the forest; the fairy Croustellante was an imaginary being brought forward to try you; my son, the little blue page, loves you, and I request you to accept him as your future husband. Your father restores you his tenderness, and if you keep your promise, you will be the most fortunate of women; but, Belzamina, I charge you never to forget, that obstinacy, violence, and ill-nature are vices which would again cast you from all your comforts, and put you a second time into the power of toads, serpents, and all those venomous reptiles which are so disgusting to mankind, and ever flown from with horror.'

These, my children, were the words uttered by the good Fairy of the Flowers; and the misfortunes she had experienced struck so forcibly on the mind of her auditor, that in the end she became as amiable and conciliating as she had before been violent and overbearing, contributing at once to the happiness and delight of her father, her husband, and friends.

EVENING THE SEVENTH.

'I HEARD great murmurs just now,' cried my grandmamma, on taking her seat in the midst of us. 'Pray, Francis, what right had you to tell your brother Adolphus that he was my pet, that I gave him all he asked for, whilst you were never indulged in the same manner; that I had eyes only for him,

he was so coaxing and fond of me. You did not, I believe, sir, think I was near enough to hear these unjust reproaches, which have their origin in jealousy and envy; such sentiments, my children, should immediately be banished from the heart. Pray, when did you know me, in the slightest degree, make any difference between your brothers and yourself; and since the first moment you became inhabitants of this house, have you not jointly and equally shared my affection and kindness? You cannot imagine, because self-love may lead you into the error of supposing that you are superior in any respect to Adolphus, that I shall be of the same opinion, or show you greater attentions than the rest. Come and sit down by me, and do not cry, for your tears have not the power to move me in the least, being, as I am perfectly convinced they are, those of wounded pride and mortified vanity, and not the overflowings of sorrow and contrition for the fault you have been guilty of, and this shows a very reprehensible disposition. But listen attentively to the history of a little boy who was called Daylight, and who believed, as you appear to do, that he was less beloved by his parents than their other children. Merit by your good conduct to deserve an equal portion of tenderness, and you will shortly discover the error you have fallen into by your ridiculous suppositions.

Story the Seventh.

THE TRAVELS OF LITTLE DAYLIGHT.

There was, some time since, a father and mother who had three children, two sons and one daughter—the eldest was named Coxcomb, and the daughter Poppet, owing to her being always dressed like a doll in a toy-shop. The youngest boy had been called Daylight, from his disposition, which was active, laborious, and quick; he always rose with the sun, and immediately sought some employment, whilst his brother and sister were either dosing on their pillows, or occupying the most precious blessing we possess, which is time, at their toilets; and because their little brother refused,

to squander his hours in so idle a manner, they had the wickedness to nickname him the sloven.

The parents of this trio were shopkeepers, who generally enjoyed their leisure hours on a Sunday at a small country house, about two miles distant from the town in which they carried on their business. On these occasions, the brother and sister did not forget to set themselves off to the best advantage whilst little Daylight appeared more respectable and genteel in a dark blue coat and nankeen pantaloons, which were constantly kept brushed and folded with care, to be displayed on that day, and which was the greatest holiday the little family could look forward to. He read well and could write a good hand, and as he seemed to possess so large a share of industry and application, his parents allowed him to remain in his own room for hours together, to follow the bent of his own inclinations, which ever led him to seek, by study, the improvement of his mind. Whilst he was thus employed, they knew not what to do with their eldest children, who would not be of the least assistance to them, but were gossiping and chattering with everybody they saw. Their good father and mother were not blind to their faults, and it must be supposed loved the good little Daylight much more than they could do the idle, vain, and silly Coxcomb and Poppet; but so careful were they not to show any difference in their attentions, that it was impossible for the most scrutinising to suppose one was dearer than the rest; and Daylight was so unconscious of his own merit and possessed so humble an opinion of himself, that in his own mind he thought it quite certain his brother and sister were the objects most beloved by his parents; while they, on the contrary, grumbled and were displeased, whenever they heard a word escape in favour of him, from the mean and selfish fear that he was the favourite of their parents. Thus it was, my children, the seeds of reciprocal jealousy and suspicion were sown in their little bosoms; and often would Daylight, when reading or writing in his room, shed torrents of tears at the unjust idea he had so unfortunately imbibed, of not sharing an equal portion of paternal tenderness. Attend seriously, my boys, at this part of the

story, and recollect it was the error he had fallen into, and the unamiable qualities of Coxcomb and Poppet, which form the sequel. Things were in this situation when the dishonest conduct of a person, with whom their father was connected in trade, occasioned his total ruin, and nothing was left for their future support but the little country-house which they owed to the mercy of their creditors, and where the family now went to reside. The vain and thoughtless brother and sister felt this loss only as it might interfere with their dress and amusements; but not of so selfish a nature was the sorrow which filled the heart of Daylight at the misfortunes of his beloved parents; for being himself frugal, contented, and industrious, he did not on his own account dread distress; no, it was the silent tears, which bathed their cheeks, when they remembered they had it no longer in their power to establish those children they so tenderly loved, which went like barbed arrows to the soul of Daylight. Disappointment and affliction rendered the good man and his wife careless to what was passing in their little family; and their two elder children observing this to be the case, assumed to themselves the management of the house. This served to convince Daylight of the truth of his surmises, and the taunts with which they seized every opportunity of treating him, induced him to form the determination of going to seek his fortune, in the hope of having it in his power to assist his beloved parents, to whom he wrote in the most dutiful style, saying, he should not return home until he could be happy enough to have the delight of serving those so dear to him, a blessing something whispered would soon occur. He then commenced his travels, and we will leave the sorrowing parents to weep the loss of this their darling boy, and follow him who foolishly flattered himself, because he could read and write, he might be fortunate enough to procure a place; and settled in his own mind that every farthing of his earnings should be dedicated to the necessities of the authors of his being. He reasoned in this instance like a silly child; but his motive was a laudable one, and we shall shortly see how he succeeded in the undertaking. The first day of his travels, he seated himself by

the side of a park fence, which seemed to bound a superb domain. After he had reflected some time on his situation, he feared night would steal upon him without his having procured a place to sleep in: so rising to continue his journey, he put his hand on the bank beside him, and thought he felt something flutter and cry under it; he searched and found beneath a long tuft of grass a lizard, which he had unintentionally nearly squeezed to death, holding in its mouth a small sprig that it seemed to be taking away with great care. 'Poor thing,' said the compassionate boy; 'perhaps you are carrying that plant home to your papa and mamma, and I have unintentionally harmed you; but go and fulfil thy dutiful errand,' said he, gently stroking it. After having warmed him some time in his hand, the lizard crept through an aperture of the rails, and Daylight pursued his route.

Having advanced a little farther, he beheld a bird's nest, which appeared to have fallen from a neighbouring tree; it was full of young ones, who, with a chirruping noise, opened their little throats as if expecting their careful parent to bring food. 'My poor things,' said he, 'I will place you again in the tree, from which I think the wind must have caused you to drop, and your poor mamma will be very glad, I dare say, to see you all again;' so saying, he mounted the branches and carefully placed the nest in a situation he judged the most convenient for the old bird to find it, who had continued to hover and flutter round his head, twittering with pleasure the whole time he was so humanely employed, as if thanking him for the trouble he was taking in saving the lives of her little ones. Self-satisfied with the benevolent action he had been led into, night had imperceptibly stolen on, and he resolved to knock at the door of a very handsome house before him. An ill-looking woman came out; 'What do you want, my little friend?' cried she. 'The kindness of being permitted to pass one night under your hospitable roof.' 'Certainly, child, you shall be kindly received here, and my master, I am certain, will be most happy to make you welcome.' Astonished at so friendly a reception, Daylight had only to express his gratitude for such unmerited kindness, and followed his conductor into a

magnificent saloon, in which he perceived a tall, thin, meagre-looking man, who exclaimed on his entrance, 'I thank you, Margaret, for having introduced this pretty boy, and I desire you will procure him a very nice supper immediately.' The servant did as she was ordered, and the traveller made a most excellent repast, but it was a solitary one, for the master of the house did not partake of it with him, but continued to view him with a most scrutinising attention; for you must know, my dears, he was a giant, who took particular delight in eating all the children which came in his way. Of this truth the terrified Daylight became convinced when he heard him in a gruff voice order his servant Margaret to fetch his large knife, which would cut down a tree like an apple. During the time the woman was gone for this famous weapon, the great giant laid Daylight on his knees, as if to examine into the condition of his prey. The trembling child exclaimed, 'For pity's sake, sir, do not eat me, at least till I have said my prayers; only leave me alone for a single quarter of an hour, and I promise that you shall then cut me up like mincemeat, if you choose it.' The giant, not foreseeing any ill effects which were likely to occur from this indulgence, consented to his request, and conducted him to a room on the ground-floor, saying he should return in a quarter of an hour, according to his own agreement. And now behold our little traveller in the utmost embarrassment, having requested this delay in order to form some plan to escape with life. He now threw himself on his knees, and prayed with the greatest fervour to be released from the destiny which threatened him with instant destruction. While thus employed, he heard the giant walk up and down on the outside of the door. 'Are you ready?' said he, in a voice of impatience. 'Not yet, sir,' returned Daylight, and continued his devotions. In another moment his host repeated, 'Are you ready?' 'One moment only,' and he wept bitterly. Presently he felt something creeping on his arm, and a voice whispered, 'Speak low, and listen with attention to what I am going to say: you must know I am the lizard whose life you saved, after having unintentionally nearly killed me, a wicked fairy having caused this

transformation in my figure, and taking from me during the day the power of speech, and the gift of the fairy which I possess in my own right; though, after the sun is down, I can do great things, for which reason I am come to assist you; so place an implicit confidence in the orders I am about to give. When the giant comes, entreat him as a last favour that he will be so obliging as to eat you beside the well which is in the courtyard, and when you are near it cast yourself in, and I promise, on the word of a fairy, that you will be saved; but silence; he is here, adieu:’ and the lizard disappeared.

The giant, now unlocking the door, exclaimed for the third time in a furious tone, ‘Well, are you ready for me?’ ‘Yes, sir,’ replied Daylight; ‘but grant me, I beseech you, the favour of looking, before I die, at that fine well of which I have heard so much.’ ‘What a fancy! but it cannot be indulged, for I shall devour you where you are at present.’ ‘You can pick my bones as well below.’ ‘I tell you I am hungry, and shall not longer delay to satisfy my appetite.’ ‘Well but if you will favour me by doing as I request, water will be near at hand, and most likely you will wish to drink during your meal.’ ‘Ah! that is indeed very true, so come along.’ He now led him to the courtyard, and when he saw the well, our little friend sprang forward and threw himself to the bottom, to the great astonishment of the wicked giant, who now saw he was assisted by the fairies that had enchanted this well in such a way that it was impossible for him to regain any person who sunk to its bottom, which when Daylight had reached, he was surprised at not finding one drop of water, but, on the contrary, a Basilisk appeared, carrying before him a pair of fine gold candlesticks, in which were wax tapers. ‘Little one,’ said he, ‘whither shall I conduct you?’ ‘To the high road as quickly as possible.’ And now, in a moment, he found himself transported to a beautiful country, where he could no longer discern the habitation of the giant who would have devoured him. The Basilisk now quitted him, but not till he had presented, in the name of his master the lizard, a beautiful basket of the finest porcelain filled with the most precious trinkets. Day-

light returned thanks in the most grateful manner to his conductor, and taking his little basket on his arm pursued his road, thinking had he but an opportunity of forwarding this treasure to his beloved parents, how happy it would make them. At this moment he heard a voice call on his name ; it was a robin red-breast who spoke: 'You restored my children to me who had fallen in their mossy cradle to the ground, and for this act of kindness I shall ever be at your disposal, and at all times ready to execute the orders you may give.' 'Ah! then, my kind robin,' replied the little boy, 'have the goodness to carry this basket to my father, who is named ——' 'I know him very well, my dear, it is sufficient you give me the commission.' The bird now took the basket and flew with it in his bill to the house of Daylight's papa, at the door of which he saw standing, Coxcomb and Poppet. 'Give this,' said the Robin, 'to your parents, in the name of your brother Daylight.' He then flew off, and the sister and brother in accents of astonishment exclaimed, 'What can this mean? surely the little sloven has already made his fortune ; but I am very curious,' continued Poppet, 'to see what it can contain ; it must be money, I should think, from its weight ;' but in turning it about to examine its contents, it fell to the ground and broke to pieces. A serpent now crept from underneath its fragments and began to hiss violently at Poppet and her brother, who immediately sought refuge in the house. During this time the good little boy continued his travels, delighted at having been able to send any thing to his parents by which they should remember him. He now saw a fine fowl approaching, of a bright gold colour, who said, 'Stop, my little fellow, for a moment ; you behold in me a person who has been unfortunately metamorphosed by a fairy, who has pursued the whole of my family ; for I am the aunt to your friend the lizard, whose life you once saved, for which good action receive as a recompense one of my eggs, which contains the richest and most beautiful stuffs. 'Thank you kindly, Mrs. Hen,' said the polite little Daylight, and he instantly wished to send this present to his mother. The robin perched on his head and desired to

receive his orders, which were no sooner given than the bird flew off, and again found the idle pair at the door. 'Here,' said the kind robin, 'is an egg which the little Daylight sends his mother.' 'An egg, indeed,' said Poppet, 'that's a fine gift truly, and well worthy of the sloven.' 'It seems, however, a very fresh one,' said Coxcomb, 'and I have a great mind to eat it : ' so saying he cracked the shell, and a monkey came out of the yolk, who began to chatter and swear like a parrot; when they fled from the spot more alarmed than before.

Daylight went forward, in the idea of soon coming to some great town, where he might gain an employ. Being near a farmhouse, he saw a flight of ducks, one of whom quitted its company, and came quacking towards him; and looking on Daylight he said, 'I am first cousin to the lizard, its mother being my aunt, so that you see we are very closely united; and as you was once so obliging to him, I beg, out of gratitude for the favour conferred, you will oblige me by accepting this small glass, the effects of which are wonderful; and do me the justice to believe, that I shall ever remain your most obedient humble servant, Quack, Quack, Quack.' The duck now waddled away to his comrades, and the pretty robin again perched on his shoulder, saying, 'What do you intend doing with this looking-glass?' 'Send it to those to whom I have already forwarded the china basket and miraculous egg.' He now looked in his little glass and beheld himself so very beautiful, that he could scarcely know his own features. The winged messenger took the mirror, and flew to the house he had before visited, where he yet found Poppet and Coxcomb at the door. 'This queer bird,' said they, 'always comes as ambassador extraordinary from the little sloven.' The robin civilly told them he had now brought a looking-glass for the acceptance of their parents. 'A fine present, truly,' said Poppet, 'which we can buy at our fair for twopence a piece; however, it will do to place in the corner of my bedroom, for when one is as pretty as I am, it is impossible to view ourselves too often.' So saying, she raised the glass to her face, in which she no longer beheld her own features, but those of a monster, who threw on

her the most terrifying looks. On beholding so frightful an image, she let the glass fall, which broke in a hundred parts.

The dutiful son, after his adventure with the duck, continued his solitary travels, happy in the reflection that his dear father and mother were enjoying the full possession of all the comforts he had sent them. 'At least,' thought he, 'they will have an opportunity of knowing the affection of that son, to whom they have ever preferred his brother and sister.' 'How I wish it was possible for me,' continued he, 'to be unobserved by them in some little corner of their apartment, just to hear what they now think of me.' Scarcely had the wish escaped his mind, when he heard something call upon him; he turned, and saw a beautiful little grasshopper. 'I am a relation to the lizard, being his son's wife, and a victim, like the rest of his family, to the wicked fairy, who pursues our whole race with so much fury. You wish, I find, to see your parents unnoticed by them, so take this sprig of herb in your hand, and the blue stone which you will find beneath it, in your pocket.' Scarcely had he done as he was ordered, when he was astonished at finding the branch turn into a flying stick. Yes, my children, wonderful as it seems, the small branch he had plucked became a cudgel, surrounded with wings, on which Daylight mounted as he would have done a horse, which carried him with inconceivable velocity through the air; and in a short time he arrived at the house of his father, invisible and transparent as a zephyr. Coxcomb and Poppet were standing in their usual idle manner at the door, saying a thousand unkind things of their amiable little brother. Daylight passed them without making himself known, and went on to the room in which his father and mother were sitting. 'Poor little fellow,' said his kind papa, 'he quitted home, only because he feared he was less dear to us than the others; when, could he but know the real sentiments of our hearts, he would be convinced of the injustice of his suspicions; for my part, notwithstanding our distress, I have yet reserved this watch, which I ever intended for our dutiful Daylight.' 'Dear, dear boy,' interrupted his mother, 'how could he harbour such a

surmise? For my part, as a proof how tenderly I have ever thought of him, here is a pretty little pair of silk stockings, and three new cravats, I have been working for the beloved runaway; but, alas! we have had no news of him, though he has been gone so long, and in all likelihood we shall never more have the transport of embracing so amiable and so dear a child, who, from being so much more dutiful than his brother and sister, is justly entitled to the largest portion of our esteem and commendation.' It was now explained to the little invisible, those presents he had so carefully forwarded, must have been intercepted by Poppet and Coxcomb; and while he was considering in what manner it was best for him to proceed, his father continued: 'There is nothing now remaining, my beloved wife, which can again attach us in this world, for to-morrow we shall be reduced to the mortifying necessity of disposing even of this house, as the last resource our poverty has left us. Coxcomb and his sister must do as well as they can to gain a maintenance, while you and I retire to some unknown corner of the world, and weep for the remainder of our days the loss of our beloved Daylight.' He, unable longer to contain these emotions by which he was nearly overpowered, cast from him the flying stick that had rendered him invisible; and running towards them he exclaimed, 'No, my beloved parents, you will not quit this asylum. I have some friends who can procure us the means of living with comfort where you are. I have, at this moment, a stone in my pocket, which was the gift of the good fairy, but I am as yet ignorant of its use.' In saying this, he searched in his little trowsers, and what was his transport and astonishment at not finding the stone, but, in its place, quantities of gold, silver, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and sapphires; and as fast as he emptied the contents of his pockets on the table, they continued to fill, and overflow with his newly acquired treasures like torrents of water pouring from a spring. During this time his parents were caressing him with the greatest tenderness. Poppet and Coxcomb now entered, astonished at beholding the little sloven with such a profusion of wealth, which the moment they attempted to touch, it turned into dirty bits of

earth, and crumbled to pieces in their hands. The door of the apartment was now thrown open, and a large party of gentlemen and ladies made their appearance, paying their compliments in the most elegant style imaginable. 'I am the Genius Lizard,' said the person who first came forward; 'a cruel enemy had metamorphosed the whole family, my sister to a robin red-breast, my aunt to a fowl, my cousin to a duck, and my son's wife to a grasshopper. The term of our probation is just ended, and being again restored to our original form, we are come to offer our personal congratulations to the worthy parents of our good little friend Daylight, who deserves the highest recompense we can bestow, for the humanity he once evinced towards myself and the little ones of my sister, the robin red-breast. On this account we conceive him entitled to the blessings we are about to bestow, which are, that he shall live a hundred years, rich, and without infirmities; but for Miss Poppet and Master Coxcomb, they must submit to the punishment they have so justly merited, by breaking the china basket that enclosed the most precious stones, and an egg which hid the finest stuffs within it; and, besides this, a mirror, made on purpose to discover our true and false friends to observation. All these precious gifts were intended by your son to have reached your hands, but the moment they were contaminated by the touch of your less worthy children, the basket became a serpent, the egg a monkey, and the glass reflected to Poppet a striking resemblance of her own soul, which I must say is truly diabolical.' The lizard now put forth his hand on Poppet and her brother, and directly the former became transformed into a black cat, and the latter to a rough French dog. The generous Daylight and his parents were sorry at this transformation, and did all they could to prevent it; but the lizard was inflexible, and they now thought only of amusing this amiable party, who remained eight days on a visit with them; during which period the house resounded with the exclamations of delight, which filled the breasts of its inhabitants. Daylight ever continued to constitute the sole felicity of his parents; and, during the remainder of his life,

had only one regret, and that was, the having allowed himself even for a moment to doubt of the affection and tenderness they had ever evinced towards him.

EVENING THE EIGHTH.

‘I HAVE chiefly commendations to make this evening,’ said my grandmamma. ‘You have all been very good, and it delights me to be able thus to praise my children; but, however, there is one thing I cannot forget to mention, and that is one of you, and I believe it was George, kicked and beat the great yard dog; because, in passing his house, he seemed to show an inclination to partake of what I had given him for his luncheon, and I cannot bear to see animals ill-treated; besides, had Rover fallen on the child and hurt him, it would have served him right; but the poor beast was too generous to do so, well knowing his own superiority over the weak and puny antagonist he should have to encounter; but tell me, George, what induced you to behave in this way to our faithful old friend, who guards us of a night, and does all he can to serve and be grateful to us for any kindness he may receive.’ ‘My dear grandmamma, it was our neighbour little Jones who desired I would kill him if ever I had an opportunity; because, he says, Rover is always snarling and grumbling at him.’ ‘I am sure he deserves it, a wicked wretch; destroy my poor old faithful dog, indeed!’ exclaimed my enraged grandmamma; ‘pretty advice he has given you; what an inhuman disposition he must have; and he wishes to corrupt and make you as bad as himself; but never more shall he enter these doors. I shall take good care to prevent the visits of himself, and his brother and sister, whom he begged leave to bring; but were I to encourage his visits, he would shortly make you all as barbarous and inhuman as himself. This unfortunate acquaintance brings to my recollection a very short story, but one I have remembered ever since I was as young as you now are: it will warn you against heeding the advice given by those who evince an interested or cruel disposition.’

Story the Eighth.

THE LAME RAT.

There was once upon a time a man who filled the office of cook to a person of high rank, and, as his master saw a great deal of company, the larder was constantly well supplied with all kinds of good things; but the cook had for a long time remarked that it was constantly robbed by vermin, and supposed it to be rats and mice. Armed with weapons of destruction, he one day entered it with a determination to murder all he could find; and shutting the door softly after him, he began carefully to examine the holes and corners of the room. After some little time he discovered, lying snugly on a shelf, a large black rat. 'Ah! wretch,' said the cook, 'it is you, then, who rob me of my cheese, butter, and bacon; but I will now, by killing you, be repaid for all.' 'I entreat that, in pity to my age and infirmities, you will have the kindness to spare my life, for I have lost one of my poor little paws, and am much advanced in years. I have also to lament the loss of an eye.' 'Very likely,' replied his angry antagonist, 'but you appear to be still in possession of a most excellent taste and smell, and a remarkably fine set of sharp teeth; or else you are mighty ingenious to devour so many good things as I am robbed of.' 'It is true, sir, I am still fortunate enough to be in possession of those blessings to which you allude, but those are the sole advantages I possess; however, attend to me, who, if you will suffer me to escape with life, can point out a method by which you may make your fortune.' 'Speak.' 'You will promise then not to injure me?' 'Yes.' 'To suffer me to stay where I am, unmolested?' 'Without doubt.' 'To feed me well with bacon and cheese?' 'Be assured you shall have plenty.' 'Well, then, look at that basket which was sent yesterday to your master; thinking it might be some kind of fresh provision (you will excuse my fault), I made a passage into it, in the hope of being regaled with country dainties; but judge of my surprise on finding pieces of gold instead of the rarities I had expected. Take this money and

apply it to your own use, and in its room pack up some eatables, and your master will not have the least idea of the robbery.' The cook followed this wicked advice, took the money, put some game in the basket, informed his employer of the present, and served it at his table; and to avoid giving any suspicion of his riches, still continued in service, and kept the promise he had made the old lame rat, allowing him to remain in the barracks he had chosen; but he abused the liberty his cunning had secured, by having the effrontery to introduce other rats of his acquaintance; saying, by way of boasting of his own consequence, 'Come, my good friends, and live with me, for I am in excellent quarters, and quite at home. We shall want for nothing that is good, for the larder abounds in bacon, butter, meat, and above all in the finest Parmesan cheese; all of which will be at your disposal as much as mine.' This select society accepted his invitation; but such numbers soon demolished so much provisions, that the cook one day complained of the devastation they made to his friend the lame rat. 'Who,' cried he, in a passion, at missing a pound of butter in an hour, 'are all this posterity you bring about with you?' 'Pardon me, my good friend, for this trespass on your kindness, but they are all relations, chiefly children and grandchildren; you know I am old and infirm, and I like to see those who are young and active about me, whose tender care soothes my sorrows, and good spirits support my own.' 'I care nothing about that, and if you do not send them all off I will take every trap I can find and catch and kill your whole fraternity.' 'Stop! stop! you will not be so cruel, but permit me to enjoy my domestic circle in comfort, and I will reveal a great secret to you: yesterday, in running up and down the walls in order to discover a comfortable bedroom for myself, I saw a small box placed between some bricks; and as your master is an old miser, it is possible he has hid something precious in it; but come this way and you shall see.' The cook obeyed and great was his joy, when on opening the box he discovered a beautiful diamond necklace. He thanked the rat and gave permission for his family to remain with him. Very shortly after, the descend-

ants of the old rat intermarried with strangers, whom they brought to the habitation of their grandfather and introduced to him as their wives, the most lively, brisk little mice to be imagined, whom they brought from a neighbouring kitchen; and not having been so well fed as they found themselves in the quarters to which their husbands had transplanted them, contrived to devour a great deal of the dainties they had found in the larder. 'Oh, oh!' said the cook one day, 'it appears to me that my friend the rat most seriously abuses the kindness I have shown him; holloa, you old lame fellow, where are you?' 'Behold me,' said he, creeping out of a tub of fresh butter, and his greasy whiskers showing how well he had been amusing himself. 'I tell you what,' said he, 'I will not feed the whole race of mice you have now brought forward, and if you do not dismiss them I must be obliged to shut into this room the cat, which I shall borrow of the lady's maid, who will soon polish their bones for them.' 'Cruel one! know you not these little mice are the wives of my grandchildren; and of course must be dear to your old friend; and could you barbarously occasion a separation between those so tenderly connected, and by so doing rob me of my only consolation—the enlivening society of my dear children?' 'I see no reason for their all living upon me in this strange manner, and they shall decamp, I tell you.' 'Well then, if you will consent to let us all remain quietly together, I can yet do you a great kindness.' 'Tell me then what it is?' 'One of the women servants has put all her savings, which are considerable, in a packet, which is hid over her bed's head; look there, and you will see I do not deceive you.' The roguish cook, willing to get all he could, did as the lame rat bid him, and found the pieces of money which had been mentioned; and though for a moment he felt something like compulsion at the villany of his conduct, yet he could not resist pocketing the savings of poor Jenny, who had worked hard to secure it, and he once more suffered the colony of rats to remain in quietness. In a little time the daughters-in-law of the old tempter brought him such a numerous family of great grandchildren, that the cook could scarcely enter the larder with-

out treading on some of the infant animals. The man, furious at this, called the old rat: 'Wretch,' cried he, 'I am in a pretty scrape owing to you; all who belong to the family that ever enter this room reproach my negligence in suffering such a nest of mice to gain a harbour here; and now, once for all, I tell you that if yourself and every branch of your family do not quit this very day, you shall every one of you be poisoned.' 'Fool,' cried the rat, 'do you think it is in your power to frighten me by such threats? Know you not that your very life is in my hands; for am I not in possession of a secret which would hang you, should your master receive information of the gold, the casket of diamonds, and the hoarded treasure of poor Jenny? which, if you ever pretend to disturb me and my inoffensive children, he shall most certainly know; but, on the contrary, suffer my family to remain unmolested, and I will put you in a way to be as rich and great as your master himself.' 'Tell me then this moment.' 'We have discovered in the granary above, to which, for a change, we sometimes resort, a great iron chest which contains immense riches; a proof of the conspiracy in which your master is engaged in against the state: go, impeach him, and they will give you his treasures as a recompense for the discovery.'

The cook, now struck with the guilt of his former conduct, and seriously repenting of all he had done, thus replied to the lame rat: 'Wicked animal, you have already rendered me the most dishonest and ungrateful creature upon earth, and this last proof of your diabolical spirit has opened my eyes to the danger which is ever run by listening to the advice of those who, like you, are without any principle whatever, and who under the mask of serving others, never rest until they have succeeded in rendering them as worthless as themselves; but now you shall be all routed, I promise you.' So saying he snatched up a great hatchet, which he made such good use of, that in a short time he extirpated the whole race of the lame rat—children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and grand daughters-in-law; in short, the whole posterity. When he had executed this just punishment, he fell at the feet of his master, avowed his crime,

restored the gold and diamonds, and gave back to the industrious Jenny all the money he had so basely taken from her: his master was at first, as might be supposed, very angry, but in a short time, penetrated with his sorrow and compunction, he generously gave him sufficient to enable him to pass the remainder of his life in honest industry.

EVENING THE NINTH.

My grandmamma entered the room, drawing one of my brothers by the arm after her: 'So,' said she, 'Mr. Thomas, you are so very indiscreet, as to be always talking to your playfellows of every little occurrence which happens in my family; what provisions I have in my house, and the exact quantity of every thing I possess: prating little fellow, it was you gave out that I had reserved twenty bushels of apples; and this being mentioned again, some of my neighbours who, owing to the scarcity of this year, had none in their own orchards, came to request I would spare them half the quantity; this I declined doing; they grumbled, and, I have just heard, accused me of unkindness and ill-nature, in keeping so much for my own consumption, when others are forced to go without any. Thoughtless boy, do you not know they were saved with care, in order to make tarts and puddings for you during the winter? However, in future, sir, I shall never mention before you what I have in my store-rooms, but keep it under lock and key, to prevent the ill consequences of your love of gossiping with all the idle children who come in your way. But now attend to some circumstances which befel a chattering little boy like yourself; sit down then, and be very attentive, that you may avoid the like fault in future.'

Story the Ninth.

THE SINGING DOLL.

There was a poor woman, who finding herself on the bed of death, called her son, then about eight years of age, to her:—'My dear Tommy,' said she, 'when I am no more, you must take the band-box which is on my drawers, and

carry it to the house of your godmother, the fairy Tonton, who will, I trust, take charge of you; but forget not, my little love, to be very submissive and dutiful to her orders, for she alone can supply my place to you.' Tommy cried violently, and when his mother had breathed her last sigh, he prepared to obey the commands she had given him, and with the box tucked under his arm, proceeded to the house of the fairy, who lived in a neighbouring wood. 'Who's there?' said a voice from within. 'Madam, it is Tommy, your little godson, who has just had the misfortune to lose his good mamma, and brings a box, which, with her dying breath, she commanded to be given to you.' 'Come in, my dear, I know very well what it contains. And so you have no home, nor any parents to love and help you; but don't cry, you shall stay here and be my child, and I will give you the greatest blessing you can receive—a good and pious education, and make you some day, I hope, as deserving a character as your poor father was; in which case, you will be an honour to your family, and useful to society; but you must promise me to be very good and tractable.' 'I will indeed, ma'am, do all you would have me.' 'Well, then, I warn you, whatever you see or hear in my house, you never mention out of it to a living creature.' 'Ah! it would not be proper, I am sure, for a child like me to speak of any thing which passes in the house of his protectress.' 'That is a very sensible reply, my dear; I love you for it, and you shall have a nice little jacket and pantaloons, silk stockings, and a real gold watch in your pocket; will all this please you?' 'Perfectly so, my kind godmother.'

The fairy now kissed him, and he was left to eat his breakfast while she retired to her room with the box he had brought. Tommy was very curious to know its contents, but dared not ask the question. Some days had now elapsed, and the happy boy was so caressed, and treated with such kindness, that he was delighted with his situation. Every morning he was occupied in his education, but in the evenings he was suffered to go and play in the woods with other little urchins of his own age. Among these children, there were two who particularly attached his unsuspecting

heart. Unfortunately he was ignorant they were the sons of a neighbouring giant, who was the bitter enemy of his god-mother; neither did she know that he had sent them to make an acquaintance with her boy, or she would have put him upon his guard, or have prevented him from associating with company she could not but think improper. The young giants, in following the instructions of their father, had also some ends of their own to accomplish; for they already felt an appetite to devour children, although they were not yet strong enough to destroy them; but they had laid a plan to get poor little Tommy into their power, when they could both fall upon and devour him.

Observe, my dears, how imprudent it was in thus selecting such wicked children for his favourite companions; but this is often the way that little folks give the preference to those who are the least worthy of notice, and by making confidants of them, run themselves into danger. Thus it was with Tommy, who had told his playmates of his adoption by the good fairy Tonton, and mentioned the box he had brought from his poor mother to her. They said, situated as he was, they should most certainly have opened it on the road, just to see what were its contents; but it is not now too late, continued they, for you may yet slip unobserved some day into her room, and just peep at it, and then be sure to tell us who are dying to know all about it. Tommy promised to satisfy his own curiosity, and that of his friends, the first moment he had an opportunity; and soon after, the fairy being engaged in a distant apartment, he flew to hers, and beheld on a table the band-box which he opened, and to his astonishment, finding nothing in it; he went to his friends to inform them how useless had been his attempt. 'It was certainly something very precious,' said they, 'and your god-mother has removed it into some closet or other; if I were in your place, I would search everywhere till I found the treasure left by your own mamma, which it is very unjust of Tonton thus to keep from you.' The idea of its having been his mother's legacy, and thus hid from him, sadly raised the curiosity of little Tommy, and he promised nothing should prevent his making the discovery. His god-

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mother went out one day, and he again entered her chamber; but remained in the greatest wonder and astonishment, when, on approaching her wardrobe, he heard the most delightful singing. 'What can this be?' thought he; and with his ear close to the keyhole, he listened. A female voice seemed to proceed from it, whose notes were the most harmonious he had ever heard. When he mentioned this circumstance to the young giants, they persuaded him to open the closet, and discover this singular mystery. About this period, the fairy was obliged to attend a council at a considerable distance; the journey was to occupy her some days, and having entrusted her family to the care of her dear Tommy, she went off, mounted on a cloud, which took her out of sight in a moment.

On finding himself alone, he was determined to penetrate the secret of the closet; but how was this to be accomplished, Tonton having the key; besides which, she had locked the door of her room. In much distress he communicated this dilemma to his advisers, who furnished him with an enchanted ring which no lock could resist. He returned to the house, applied it, and succeeded in gaining admission to the room; the closet door also soon opened, and Tommy beheld, with the greatest surprise, a beautiful doll, magnificently dressed; and having placed her on a table, she gracefully balanced herself to the right and left, waving her arms and moving her head with ease and elegance; in short, it was this wonderful doll that sung with so much precision, the most favourite opera airs; for though so little in her person, she had a full voice, sweet and melodious as a flute; and then to delight him the more, she began to dance a *regaudons*, and made *entrechats* light and graceful as *Vestris*. She did not speak, so it was useless to question her, as she only uttered the air of her song in the following manner:— 'Ah, ah, ah, hi, hi, hi, eh, eh, eh!' and then the cadences 'Trelire Ca.' The delighted boy amused himself a long time with this precious toy; then placing it in the closet, he flew to impart the wonders he had seen; and the young giants entreated him to bring it to them to admire for a moment only; a request the indiscreet boy promised to comply with

in the evening. During the intermediate time, the artful little giants went home, and told this wonder to their father. 'Ah!' replied he, 'this is the talisman possessed by the fairy which gives her all her power, though I well knew I should one day gain it; for you must know, my children, this doll was given to mark her superiority. Observe, it was silent and mute with the mother of Tommy till her death; then it was ordained that the talisman should be brought to Tonton, where it should always sing; which, as long as it continued to do, her power was secured; but the moment the talisman leaves her house, her superiority vanishes, and she becomes my victim: so go, and do all you can to get it out of the boy's hands, and bring it me immediately.' The little giants obeyed their father, and returned to the wood, where they waited for their indiscreet companion and his wonderful plaything, who, when he saw the day declining, struck the closet with his ring, and took out the precious doll, which he placed on a marble table before a large looking-glass. She, as if conscious of his intentions of taking her out, began to adjust the curls of her beautiful flaxen hair; then wrapping her shawl round her in the present fashion, she began to sing like a nightingale. Tommy having admired her for some time, took her in his arms, and quitted the house, having first carefully shut the door after him, and flew to the spot where he expected to find his companions. They were accompanied by other children, and the delighted little group had formed a circle round the happy Tommy and his accomplished favourite, whom they heard sing and saw dance with inexpressible amazement. Each took hold of it in their turn, and bestowed the most lavish praises on its wonderful beauty and acquirements; however, night coming on, it was thought necessary to separate from so fascinating an object; and Tommy remained alone with the young giants, who yet held the doll; and in a moment, when he was looking about at some object that attracted his attention, a horse appeared, on which the treacherous children mounted, and galloped off in spite of the cries and prayers of their heart-broken companion, with the magic object of his affection. He now, too late, became sensible of his own folly, and,

half frantic, approached the residence of his godmother; but what tongue can do justice to his remorse and shame, when he beheld in the place of that pretty abode, which had so kindly received and sheltered him, a heap of ruins. 'Ah! I am indeed lost for ever,' exclaimed he, 'for I have destroyed my kindest, my only friend, and have now only to repent; then lay me down and die.' He rambled during the night amongst the thickets of the wood, and, in his agonies of despair, sought for some precipice, over the sides of which he might cast himself. During the moment that he was uttering the most bitter cries, beneath a spreading tree, under whose branches he had thrown himself, a man passed saying, 'My poor little fellow, what is the matter with you?' 'Oh, sir, I am the most wicked and naughty child in the world; for I have, owing to my own disobedient conduct, lost the beautiful Singing Doll of my kind godmother's.' 'Come with me, and we will find it.' 'Oh! can that indeed be possible?' 'I know where it is, and am besides an enchanter; so do not fear our recovering it.' You will observe, my dears, that Tommy was now guilty of another great act of imprudence, by thus committing himself to the care of a perfect stranger, whose very features, the darkness which surrounded them prevented him from distinguishing; and they continued to walk on together, till the stranger knocked loudly at the door of a house, which resembled a fortification as much as one drop of water is like another. An old woman opened it, and the giant, for it was himself, pushed the poor little creature in before, who now perceived the fate to which his own imprudence had made him the victim. He ventured to observe his conductor, and beheld a man of gigantic stature, his eyes red as fire, and his tremendous form wrapped in a long black robe. He wore on his head a cap, adorned with a large plume of feathers, which seemed like those nodding on a hearse. The child was now ordered to be put into a shocking dungeon, 'For,' said the wicked giant to the old woman, 'he has been guilty of ingratitude and disobedience to his godmother, and ought to be punished for so great a crime; so take him immediately below, where he will have the satis-

faction of hearing his friend the Singing Doll, whom he can never again behold.' His commands were instantly obeyed, and the poor little culprit conducted to a dungeon, in which he continually heard the voice of that precious plaything he had loved so well, and who seemed to be now only separated from him by a slight partition. 'Ah, how culpable I have been in having thus exposed that dear doll, who, had I kept her safely locked up in the house of my kind god-mother, would at present have remained in the closet where she had placed it; and at times, perhaps, her goodness might have indulged me with the sight of it, for when did she ever refuse a request I made her? and it is this recollection which makes me still more wretched, by having thus acted in direct opposition to the commands she gave me, on my first becoming a member of her family; and it is for this I am, as I well deserve to be, placed in the hands of a giant, who will most certainly devour me.' Again the bitter tears of terror and repentance flowed from his eyes; and he now beheld the door of his prison burst open, and his former companions enter, who immediately began to ridicule and laugh at him. 'Ah, you foolish little telltale,' exclaimed they, 'without even knowing anything about us, you was simple enough to confide the most important secret of your life to our keeping; but now, learn that we are the sons of that giant who brought you from the wood. Both my brother and I are fond of eating little folks, and we could do so this very moment, only we think it best to keep you till to-morrow for breakfast.' 'For pity's sake eat me immediately, I beg it of you.' 'No, no, it is right you should suffer more before you die, for your folly and imprudence.' They now withdrew, and Tommy remained a day and night in his solitary confinement, 'obliged to live, during that time, on black bread and a little dirty water, which had been left in the morning. However, it may be easily supposed that the greatest dainties would have been equally indifferent to him at such a time, as the coarse fare which offered itself to his view. Early in the morning the giant entered his prison, and drawing him by the arms, said, 'This is the last hour of your life; recommend yourself to mercy, and follow me.'

He threw himself on his knees, requesting forgiveness of all his faults. The wicked giant then carried him in his arms to the top of a high mountain, which was surrounded by a horrid bog, overflowing with stinking water, from which a thousand venomous reptiles raised their horrid heads. On one side were toads, on the other, serpents, crocodiles, and adders. 'All the creatures you see below,' said the giant to Tommy, 'are my children; and it is to your godmother Tonton they owe their present disgusting appearance, she having transformed them to vex me; and it is but retribution that you become their prey; you see they are already looking up to me, as if to inquire what food it is I have brought for their breakfast.'

The frightened child was now more dead than living, and his tormentor taking him by one leg, held him thus suspended in the air for a moment, before he was to drop him into the jaws of that destruction he saw waiting to receive him. In this dreadful extremity he loudly exclaimed, 'Ah! my dear godmother, where are you now?' They presently saw a woman making towards them, mounted on a flying cat; and as she approached, quick as a breath of wind towards the wicked giant, he immediately touched him with a little ring, which in a moment deprived him of motion. The fairy Tonton, for it was herself, snatched the fainting Tommy in her arms, and addressed herself as follows to him who would have murdered her little favourite:—'Wretched being, thy mind is darker and more destructive than the reptiles beneath us; learn, then, that yourself, as well as all which belong to you, shall receive the punishment of your crimes; and know, that if by the imprudence of a child I lost the Singing Doll, I now possess a power superior to what even its possession could have procured me: the council of the fairies, from whom I am just arrived, have named me their president, and to convince you of this, as you are so fond of eating, I will give you a form agreeable to your brutal appetite; so, for two hundred years, you must remain a frightful black hog.' She immediately touched him with her ring, and he went grunting away. The young giants now appeared to implore mercy for their father, and they became

immediately changed by the same power into young sucking pigs, who began to run after their hog papa. When she had thus disposed of her enemies, the good Tonton placed on the grass her once disobedient godson, who in his turn received a severe lecture on his fault: 'but,' said this indulgent fairy, 'the punishment you have received has been a sufficient one, and I now grant you my pardon, on condition you never more fall into the like error.' Tommy vowed he would in future be everything she could desire; and together they visited the house of the giant, from which the talisman was immediately removed, and transformed into a very sweet child about the age of Tommy, and to whom she gave the name of Mayflower; when they became old enough to be united, they were married in the midst of the most superb fêtes, and the whole brilliant circle of all the fairies on earth. Tommy made a very good man, and never, to the latest moment of his life, forgot the singing favourite, or the sorrow and danger he had brought upon himself by the disobedience and imprudence of his conduct.

EVENING THE TENTH.

My grandmamma came in, followed by one of our neighbours, a farmer in the village. 'My good friend,' said she, 'look at these eight young rogues, and see if among them you can discover the mischievous boy who broke all the eggs in your henroost, besides twisting the necks of your chickens.' 'Madam,' said farmer Jennings, 'as well as I can remember from the glimpse I had of the young gentleman, who, on my approach, jumped over the wall into the orchard, it is the very same who is half hid behind the door.' 'What, George? and can it be him who has discovered such a character, as to be found out robbing his neighbours; and then to have the cruelty to kill those inoffensive creatures through mere wanton barbarity? But, my good old neighbour, you must have all your losses repaid out of my poultry court, and I request your acceptance of as many eggs and chickens as my unworthy grandson has deprived you of; who, as a punishment for this heinous offence, I condemn for three

days to a regimen of bread and water.' 'Good madam, the poor young gentleman seems to repent his fault, and I must take the liberty of requesting your forgiveness for him.' 'You must excuse me, farmer, for in this instance I cannot show any mercy myself, as that little pickle is continually in some mischief—such as beating my dog, pinching the ears of my cat, or slapping and plaguing his brothers—so that he must now receive the reward of such evil actions, and ought to think himself but too happy that he is not placed in a similar situation with a great boy who acted in some degree like himself. But can you, neighbour, sit down for a short time, and listen to what befel a child under the same disgrace?' 'Willingly, madam, I shall avail myself of your offer.' And my grandmamma having seated herself, began as follows:—

Story the Tenth.

BERNIQUET.

There was a boy who was so very untoward in temper, and at the same time so horrible in his figure, that his parents knew not what to do with him. Berniquet, which was his name, joined to the greatest folly a character of such ferocious cruelty, as made those who would have pitied his weakness view him with sentiments of horror and disgust; and early in infancy he began to practise petty thefts on his father and his neighbours, his only delight being in acts of cruelty, one instance of which I shall now give you: he would dig a hole in the earth, in which he would bury a miserable fowl up to its neck, leaving the head only visible, and sometimes divert himself with listening to the groans and cries of the tortured bird; then he would take a large knife, and at last end its misery, by cutting off the head of his poor victim: another favourite amusement was twisting the necks of his mother's pet birds, which hung in cages in her dressing-room, strangling her favourite cat, and had pinched almost to death her pretty little dog; in one word, he was a child cruel and wicked in the extreme. His father, worn out with such repeated acts of inhumanity, and seeing that it was impossible he could ever alter for the better, one

morning gave him a little bag of provisions, saying at the same time, 'Berniquet, I for ever forbid your future entrance to my house, unless you are brought to a due sense of your crimes, and heartily repent of them, in which case you will still possess a father; but, till that time, your residence must be at such a distance, that I may never hear of you more, unless it be in the way I have pointed out.' Berniquet would have remonstrated, but his father was determined, and shut the door in his face. When he found himself thus disgracefully driven from his father's house, he began to cry, but they were tears of anger, and not of remorse, which he shed. Not knowing whither to bend his steps, he took the first road which presented itself to his notice. Towards the middle of the day he sat down on a stone, and began to make a dinner of some bread and cheese, which he drew from his bag, murmuring as he eat against his father and all nature. 'When I have,' said he, 'eat up all my little store of provision, who will give me wherewithal to live?' 'Your own industry,' replied a voice. Berniquet looked about, and not seeing anybody near him, he continued his exclamations. 'My industry! a fine resource, truly, for one who knows only how to do mischief!' 'That is exactly what will make you prosper most,' interrupted the voice. 'Oh!' said the boy, 'is it then, by wicked actions, that one rises in the world; who is it that gives me such bad advice?' 'A person that pities, and wishes to serve you.' 'But where are you then, for I do not see any one?' 'I would render myself visible, if you would assure me that my sight would not terrify you.' 'Dear me, not at all, I am frightened at nothing, I assure you.' 'Since that is the case, behold your friend.' At the instant he observed standing before him, a kind of monkey, yellow, red, and blue, and hairy as a caterpillar. 'I am called Filourdis,' said the beast, 'and will make your fortune if you listen to and follow the counsels I shall give you. In the first place, you must think as I do, that to prosper in life you must not hesitate at any action which may appear serviceable to your own interest.' 'Well, I will endeavour to think as you do.' 'It is the only method, my young friend, by which you will advance, and there is already

a fine foundation laid by your early behaviour, at the house of your father, when you made away silyly with as much poultry as you could, and all which fell in your way. And can you suppose it is a greater crime to take money than it is to rob a henroost? so proceed to the farmhouse which you see at a little distance; the master will receive you with kindness, and I will come again to tell you how you may gain possession of all his hoarded wealth; so adieu for the present.'

The monkey disappeared, and the young rogue was enchanted with the advice he had received, and arose with the intention to gain the humble abode to which he was led by such wicked designs; however, when he had proceeded half way, he began to reflect, and accordingly seated himself at the foot of a tree. 'My friend Filourdis thinks,' said he, 'that wickedness is the sure road to prosperity, and it must be true.' 'No,' replied a soft censorious voice. Berniquet looked about, and not seeing anything, he continued to express his thoughts aloud. 'Who would give me bread?' 'Honesty, industry, and a good character,' replied the voice. 'That is not my friend Filourdis, for his notes are harsh and loud as a church clock.' 'Holloa! who are you who thus preaches to me?' 'A person who would show himself, provided you promise to attend to the good counsels he will give you.' 'Come, then, let me look at you.' Instantly he saw stand before him a beautiful young man, whose eyes flashed with inconceivable brilliancy, and his head was adorned with a sparkling light which shone like fire around him: 'Listen to me,' said this prepossessing figure, 'you have been guilty of many crimes and are at present banished from the hearts and protection of your parents; but it is not yet too late to repair your errors and be again blessed with the approbation of those, without whose good opinion it is impossible you can ever prosper; be but humane, charitable, and industrious, and in the eyes of all good men you will become an object of esteem and respect, and felicity will spread her azure mantle over your old age.' 'It may be so, but how am I to accomplish all this?' 'With ease and credit to yourself. The master of

yonder farm has at this moment occasion for a ploughboy; go, offer yourself to him, he is a good creature, and has gained much by his persevering industry, and will keep you a long time if you are good, obedient, and, above all, honest: believe me, and pursue the straight road I point out for you to follow, and you will never repent having listened to the advice of the Genius Ariel.' The beautiful youth now disappeared, and struck with the sentiments of truth so sweetly conveyed, Berniquet arose determined to follow such good advice, which seemed to bring conviction to his heart; and thinking thus he knocked at the door of the farmhouse. 'Who's there?' said a voice from within. 'A poor boy, who would be happy could he be hired as a ploughboy.' 'That is well, for I am just now in want of such a servant, so come in, my friend; be but industrious, honest, and willing, and you will have plenty to eat and drink, and shall never want some shillings in your pocket.' Behold Berniquet installed and self-applauded for the determination he had taken, who with a good conscience, after making a comfortable supper, retired to a clean bed under the hospitable roof of his worthy master. On laying down to rest he said, 'The farmer is a good man; the Genius has pointed out how I am to go on; I will obey his orders and endeavour to get my bread in an honest manner.'

'Poor fool!' said a voice, which he immediately knew to be that of his first acquaintance; 'you will advance finely in life by your work; know you not that whole years of labour will not secure you five pounds profit, while, on the contrary, this very night would enrich you for ever. Have you not noticed some newly turned earth under the third apple-tree to the right, in the garden; it is there the farmer has hid his treasure, rise and take it for your own use.' The voice was then silent, and the young man, dazzled by the idea of independence, remained some time undecided how to proceed. The evil Genius, however, conquered all his good resolves, and he descended to the garden and saw before him the apple-tree so particularly described; but on his taking the little path which led towards it, the good and beautiful Genius whispered in his ear, 'Berniquet reflect;

you are lost if you persist in robbing your master, your benefactor.' But the perverted heart of this wicked boy was not to be turned from its black purpose by such wise admonition. He proceeded, searched, and found a considerable sum of money, and ran from the garden, climbing all the walls which impeded his flight. Soon after, flames of fire burst from the farmhouse, which speedily consumed both that and the surrounding outhouses; and the wicked Filourdis came laughing to Berniquet, saying it was himself who had caused the dreadful calamity. The miserable boy felt all the pangs of conscious guilt which must ever attend those who are capable of such wicked actions; and he flew to the gloom of a thick wood to consider what he could do with a sum his dishonest actions had put him in possession of. A beautiful girl, in a state bordering on distraction, now threw herself at his feet. 'I am,' said she, 'the wretched daughter of that unfortunate farmer at whose house you passed the last night; fire has deprived him of all his property, and to fill the measure of his afflictions, somebody has taken the little store of wealth which was the fruit of many years spent in hard labour and industry. Oh, if you have any knowledge of the robber, have the goodness to inform me of it, and you will restore my dear unhappy father and his family to some degree of comfort.' Berniquet, while looking at the imploring girl, heard the good Genius whisper in his right ear, 'Give back the money, young man, and merit pardon by repentance.' At his left side very different was the advice given. 'Kill the girl, Berniquet; she suspects, and you are lost.' Divided by such opposite counsellors, which was it likely the misguided boy should lean to? Alas! my dears, it was that given by Filourdis that the wretch adopted; and taking the lovely kneeling young woman by her hair, he dashed her head against a stone: you shudder, my children, and wonder, no doubt, nature could produce such a monster; but, believe me, those who are cruel in youth are rarely more humane as they advance in life. But to continue; the blow given by the murderer, who did not see either of his two advisers, but distinctly heard Filourdis, who burst into shouts of laughter;

while the tears and groans of the amiable Ariel struck upon his ear.

He now left the lifeless victim stretched upon the grass, and plunged into the midst of the forest where he heard a little bird exclaim, 'Berniquet for the Sterling.' In another moment others repeated in the same strain; and the boy, not understanding the meaning of such words, went forward on his journey till towards daybreak, when he met an old man who was very infirm and led by his daughter—the most beautiful creature imagination could suppose; who in the sweetest accents demanded charity for her father. 'Where am I? my dear,' said he to this lovely creature. 'Oh! sir, if you are lost in this wood, hasten out of it as quick as possible, for all strangers become the prey of a famous enchanter who takes upon him the figure of a Sterling, but of a most enormous description, and it will certainly devour you should you be so unfortunate as to encounter it.' 'Ah, my love,' he replied, laughing, 'I am not such a fool as to be frightened at a bird, and if it attempts to hurt me, I shall revenge myself by twisting its neck.' Berniquet on saying this looked with attention on the young woman, whose beauty charmed him; and while gazing on her, he heard at his right the good Genius, who said, 'Give charity to these poor people and suffer them to proceed;' but at his left Filourdis snuffed out his wicked counsel, 'Marry that beautiful creature immediately, and if her father wont give his consent, kill him?' He listened to his perfidious adviser and made proposals accordingly, but was positively rejected by both; and he committed a second murder on the poor decrepit old man. The daughter escaped, and the hardened wretch proceeded on his journey. The birds were more loud in their exclamations than ever, distinctly repeating, 'Berniquet for the Sterling.' 'I understand now,' said he, 'what they mean by the words which for the last two hours have been running in my ears; they think that I shall be devoured by this redoubtable Sterling, who it seems guards these woods, and that I shall serve him for a breakfast; but they will find themselves mistaken, however, and

it would please me mightily to see him begin his undertaking.

At the turning of the path he saw a beautiful grotto, which seemed to be the entrance of a subterranean cavern, and as he was overcome with fatigue he entered it, and having seated himself on a stone he presently heard his good Genius, who said, 'Remain not here, but fly instantly.' Filourdis on the contrary cried, 'Go to the top of this rock, and if you see any person follow you, lift up the large stone you will find there.' He too faithfully followed the bad advice given, and soon perceived three or four travellers together with the beautiful daughter of the poor murdered old man. 'The monster,' she exclaimed, 'is most certainly concealed in this cave.' 'We will discover him if he be yet living,' said her deliverers, 'and resign him to the death he has so well merited.' Guilt made the wretched culprit tremble at the vengeance thus determined on by his pursuers, and the moment they entered the grotto, he loosened the stone according to the directions he had received, and the cave gave way, burying beneath its fragments the unhappy girl and the generous strangers, who would have revenged her accumulated wrongs. At this moment the woods resounded with the cry of the birds, which the echo repeated a thousand times, that Berniquet was for the Sterling. 'No, no,' exclaimed he, 'I shall not become his prey; for if he approaches, I will speedily destroy him as I have done those strangers who would have deprived me of existence.' He still continued in the woods, and observing night advance he began to experience some degree of terror. At length he came near a pond, out of which he attempted to drink, when all the reptiles who inhabit water raised their heads above its surface, saying, 'You have shed innocent blood, and shall not find a drop wherewith to moisten your parched lips.' The springs at the same moment became dried up, and the mortified youth beheld near him, a tree bending beneath the weight of the finest apples he had ever seen, and as he was trying to pluck one, a nightingale, who was perched on its branches, said, 'You are a robber, and an assassin, and will never find again even a grain of corn which

will afford you sustenance.' The fruit which had seemed so tempting now disappeared, and the echoes once more repeated, 'Berniquet is for the Sterling.' Overpowered with rage, he now loudly called on Filourdis, who came at his summons. 'I can do nothing more for you,' said the wicked monkey, 'for know that I am the Genius of all evil; you have had the weakness to follow all the bad advice I have given you, and the hour is arrived in which you will be punished for having done so. Berniquet, you are for the Sterling;' and the evil fairy vanished in the air like a cloud of smoke. The despairing boy called loudly on the good and beautiful Arial, who now stood before him, adorned even in a more brilliant manner than when he at first was visible to him. 'It is no longer in my power,' said Arial, 'to revert the fate which is now suspended over your head: you see in me the good Genius, and you well know I have endeavoured to prevent those horrid crimes with which your hands are stained. To you, as well as to all mankind, a merciful Providence has given two counsellors, one would gently draw you to the paths of virtue and everlasting happiness, the other to sin and never-ending punishment; you have listened to the latter, so adieu. I am called to a child who has this moment entered into life, and perhaps this infant will one day become a man, and more tractable than you have been to the good instructions I would have given you; but your hour is come, and I repeat, Berniquet is for the Sterling.' The beautiful fairy vanished like an extinguished candle, and the terrified wretch was left to the uninterrupted contemplation of his numerous crimes; and in a short time he beheld a bird advance towards him, at least twenty feet in height, and who, as it drew nearer, he perceived to be a Sterling. It was in vain the murderer sought to disengage himself from its gripe, and he was carried to the top of the rock, where it took up four days to devour him, one bit after another; first his heart, then his body, eyes, and tongue, till at length he was eat up. You may judge, my children, what were the sufferings of Berniquet; but had he not well deserved his fate by the wickedness of his conduct? He had robbed his master, and been the occasion of burning his

house, killed his daughter, and destroyed the life of a poor infirm old man, because he refused to give him up the only comfort of his life, his darling child, who, together with her deliverers, he condemned to an untimely fate, buried beneath the ruins of a grotto. But observe, my dears, how gradually he was led on to the commission of such heinous and multiplied crimes, and how early he began his career of wickedness; first by cruelty to animals, then to plunder his father and his neighbours, which ought to be a convincing proof, that such bad habits in children are generally the seeds of great vices, which, unless they are effectually eradicated, become the foundation of the most detestable crimes, as they advance to manhood.

EVENING THE ELEVENTH.

‘I COME, my children,’ said our grandmamma, ‘to tell you that which I will not conceal alarms me much for the present state of your dear mother’s health; her physicians tell me that my daughter is so very ill that they entertain little or no hope of her recovery. You weep, my dears, ah! how much more severe to me will be the loss of my dear daughter; my only surviving child! for in me you will all ever find a kind and tender parent, should it please heaven to take your own mamma from this world to a better.’ ‘And will you not, dear grandmamma,’ cried little Francis, ‘have other children in your poor boys?’ ‘Yes,’ my love, ‘but your beloved mother was most dear to me; yet dry up your tears, for your mamma is now only thirty, and at that age we have reason to flatter ourselves with hope; but you do not mind the comfort I give you, and am sorry to observe that you are all bathed in tears; however, I cannot blame you for giving vent to the natural expressions of filial tenderness; it is the first of virtues, and is the foundation of every other; for those who love and reverence their parents cannot fail to make good husbands, fathers, brothers, and fellow-citizens; but come, I must not see any more red eyes to-night, and will tell you a story, which is in some degree analogous to our present situation.’

Story the Eleventh.

THE TOWER OF SLEEP; OR, THE LITTLE BELL GIRL.

There was a very worthy gentleman, who having had the misfortune to become a widower, placed his whole happiness in an only child, who forcibly reminded him of that wife he had adored. This good father was called Aymar, and lived comfortably with his mother, an old lady, of about my age. It is impossible to say, by which of her parents their darling girl was most beloved. She had been called Belle-orange, because she possessed the softness and beauty of that fruit, and grew up into loveliness, goodness, and every accomplishment which could endear her to their hearts. One day a lady, elegantly dressed, requested to speak in private with Aymar, and remained so long in his study that his mother and Belle-orange, then about ten years old, were very uneasy to know what she could have to say which so long detained the master of the house; and as they did not come out, the old lady determined to join the party. But who can describe her astonishment and uneasiness when, on entering the library, she neither found her son or the lady for whom she had been some time watching; and it was impossible for them to have left the house without having been seen to do so; the window was open, but it was at too great a distance from the ground for them to have made a retreat from thence, and there must be some wonderful mystery to occasion such an abrupt departure.

The disturbed mother and affectionate daughter searched every corner of the house, and interrogated every servant, but none had seen their master go out. Evening came; night advanced, which was spent in vain conjecture; and the next day also elapsed, but still no news of Aymar. You must judge by your own feelings, my loves, what must be felt by the sorrowing mother and child, at the uncertain fate of their beloved fugitive. At the end of some days, as they were weeping together for the loss they had so unaccountably sustained, seated on the banks of a river which ran through their pleasant grounds, the grandmother exclaimed

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'I would give my whole fortune to know what has occurred to my son.' A pike, who was swimming about in the water, suddenly raised its head saying, 'Most respectable of women, I do not want your wealth; I ask only your promise that, during life, you or yours shall never eat a pike, and I will then tell you what is become of that beloved son whose loss you now deplore.' The good lady and her beautiful granddaughter repeated the requested promise, so easy to be kept, and the pike continued its conversation as follows: 'You both very well know, that the elegant Aymar is not at this time more than six and thirty years old, that he is both handsome and accomplished. The fairy Rouse, the most wicked and depraved of the whole sisterhood, has fallen in love with him; and it was herself who, five days since, came to visit him, in order to propose an immediate marriage, to which, finding he was determined not to accede, she took him out of the window into her invisible car, drawn by two scorpions.' 'Ah, kind friend, tell us instantly to what place she has conveyed him?' 'To a castle, in which he is kept a close prisoner.' 'We will fly to him, wherever he be.' 'Attend for a moment; that place is inaccessible to all the world except Belle-orange; thus has their destiny decreed. But the fairy, who knows that this young person alone has the power to snatch her father from her spells, has surrounded his abode with all the plagues a fairy can invent to terrify her, should she have courage to undertake so perilous an adventure. She has now secured her amiable captive in a place which is called the Tower of Sleep, because every person who approaches is immediately overtaken by the power of Morpheus, from only looking at its walls, and one must be wide awake to penetrate into it. However, if Belle-orange is armed with sufficient resolution, she will deliver her father from his thralldom, and will find the habitation of the fairy above two miles from hence, in the bosom of the valley of mists. I have now given you my advice, and shall retire, so adieu.' Thus spoke the pike, and then flounced under the water, and totally disappeared. The poor old lady was at first terrified at her son having become the prisoner of so detestable a fairy; but the little Belle-

orange was comforted, by knowing that she should, perhaps, have the inexpressible delight of being her father's deliverer, and she determined to set off that very instant on her filial expedition. It was in vain that her kind grandmother represented the danger of such an enterprize, or the grief she should experience to be thus left alone, trembling with terror at the idea of never more beholding either of her beloved children. The tender, courageous, and dutiful Belle-orange at length succeeded in calming her fears, promising that she would every day return before sunset, to give an account of the success of her endeavours; and, after embracing her dear grandmamma, put on her little hat, and, with a stick in her hand, departed for the valley of mists, enquiring of every person she met her road to the destined spot. Each one turned his back on the question being asked, saying, 'Ah! my child, do not think of going near that unaccountable place.' At last an old peasant put her into a path which would bring her to this marvellous spot. The sun had already marked that half the day was spent, when she saw near her an old woman bent to the earth by the double burthen of age and the quantity of branches of trees, with which she had filled her apron, and was dragging on the ground after her. The sweet little girl, whose heart was full of humanity, took pity on the miserable situation in which the poor wretch had plunged herself, and said, 'Your burden is too much for you, mother; is your cottage far from hence?' 'Oh, no,' said she, pointing with her finger to a retired hut; 'that is my home; I have been wooding, and if you will take some of these branches on your back, it will oblige me much.' She cheerfully divided the load, reserving to herself by far the heavier part, and soon arrived with her ancient conductress at the door of her cottage, but so much fatigued, that seating herself in the miserable apartment, she requested a glass of water. 'Certainly,' said the old woman; 'come with me, my dear,' and she took her into a back room: but how much was she surprised to find that this was the vestibule to a superb castle, which she had not before observed, from whence she was conducted into a magnificent saloon, ornamented with the richest furniture

and the finest glasses, which covered the entire walls. A young man now appeared, saying, 'Pardon, most amiable and lovely creature, the trick I have been playing in order to bring you to my palace. I am a genius who adores, and will now make you my wife.' Belle-orange, more alarmed than gratified by this declaration, replied, 'that she had other things to think of besides such nonsense as that;' for the deliverance of her dear father was the only thing which could engage her attention for a moment. The Genius laughed at this enterprise, which he termed romantic, and assured her it was impossible to be accomplished. He then ordered a magnificent repast to be served, during which delightful music played the most favourite opera airs. The whole scene was enchanting, but had not for a single moment the power of altering the purpose of Belle-orange, who, seeing night arrive, recollected the promise made to her grandmother, that she would not fail to return and give an account of her adventures. She rose to take her leave, but the Genius, in positive though polite terms, refused her permission to depart: at this she was terribly alarmed, and cried in an agony, at finding herself thus entrapped, 'My father! my father! Oh, my poor father!'

She was ignorant that it was written in the book of destiny that whenever she should three times call on her father, that pious exclamation would counteract all enchantments; for there is not one which can withstand the cry of filial duty; and the palace, the Genius, all disappeared, and the good child again found herself on the same spot she at first beheld the perfidious old woman, and hastening home, told her grandmother this singular event, and it struck them both as a plan of the wicked fairy's to stop the approach of the most dutiful and affectionate of children. The next morning she set off again in the determination not to stop, let what would come in her way; and about noon she found herself in the valley of mists, which she soon discerned by the thick fogs, which rendered it almost impossible to see any object a foot's length before her. This was a trick of the fairy's to prevent Belle-orange from distinguishing the Tower of Sleep in which the elegant prisoner was confined. She next dis-

covered the influence this tower had on the senses, for many persons who were passing, drawn by curiosity, went near, and immediately on doing so they began to yawn, stretch out their arms, rub their eyes, and yawn again, then fall on the ground, as if overpowered with a sensation of sleep it was impossible to resist. 'What shall I do,' she cried, 'should I be seized as those persons are, for then I shall never behold my dear papa, and shall myself fall into the hands of that wicked fairy? but I will now return, and come back to-morrow, armed with precautions to chase away sleep, if it should weigh down my eyes.' Belle-orange now returned to her expecting grandmother, who was delighted to find she kept her promise of coming home at night, and the sensible girl hung to her shoes, her robes, and her arms, a quantity of little bells, which, on her moving, made such a noise as to render it impossible she could forget herself in sleep, carrying in her hands two little cudgels to strike one against another, so as to keep herself awake by exertion and noise. After having taken leave of her grandmother, she went off thus equipped, and quickly gained the marvellous valley of mists. Every person who saw her pass exclaimed, 'Look at that child and her bells; it is Momus.' 'No, no,' exclaimed another, 'she must certainly be mad.' And thus she went on, till, coming into the valley, she began to agitate her ornaments at a great rate against each other, which effectually hindered her from falling into a doze, though now at the foot of the enchanted tower, which being formed of crystal, she could discover all that passed within the interior of its walls. Still shaking her bells and beating her sticks, she looked up and saw in a room at a great height from the ground her beloved father, who was wiping his eyes, which constantly appeared filled with tears. The wicked Rouse now entered the apartment, and exhibited to the eyes of her captive the most dazzling diamonds and a profusion of money, with which it seemed she meant to bribe him to marry her. The agitated parent extended his arms as if to push her from him, and she then seemed as if threatening to revenge herself on his amiable child, whom she pointed out to his notice. On this the persecuted man flew to the walls of crystal, and made a

sign to her, as if he entreated she would not so uselessly expose herself to the malice of their enemy, but leave him only the object of her vengeance. All this sort of conversation was supported by signs, for the tower was so very high as to preclude the possibility of hearing what was said. The affectionate girl now cast herself on her knees before her father, placed her hand on her heart, and said that she would lose her life if she had not the happiness to deliver him from his confinement. At length night approached, and the interesting child departed, after having made a thousand motions expressive of her duty and affection, and which were replied to with tenderness by the gestures of her delighted father; but she began with alarm to feel some symptoms of sleep stealing on her heavy eyelids, and hastened to make all the noise possible with her bells and sticks. Her endeavours succeeded so well that, perfectly aroused from the heavy lethargy which overpowered so many, she safely returned and astonished her venerable parent by the recital which she made of her adventures. The fourth morning the persevering little traveller again proceeded on her expedition; but on the road encountered a circumstance so singular and pleasing, that I feel much gratification in recounting it. A boy about her own age, but more beautiful than Cupid, was playing by the side of a river; his foot slipped and he fell in, and, the water being deep, would most certainly have perished had not the compassionate traveller exerted her utmost strength to drag him from his watery grave. On finding himself once more on dry ground, and by the kind restoratives she used, his senses were returned; he fixed his beautiful blue eyes on her face, which spoke more impressively than words could have done, the gratitude of his heart to his young and lovely liberatrix, who was affected even to tears at the recollection of what might have been the sufferings of his family, had not Providence conducted her steps at that moment to save a life so precious as that of her young friend; and seeing he still continued very weak, and unable to proceed alone, offered to conduct him to his mamma.

The young Tige d'Amour, which was his name, accepted the kind proposition; and as they proceeded on their road,

he informed her that his mother was a fairy, who would most certainly recompense his fair deliverer for having saved the life of her son. It was not this idea, however, which actuated the humane Belle-orangebe—nevolence and the friendship she already entertained for the good little boy were the sole motives which gave rise to the kindness of her actions. The child knocked at the door, and a lady appeared, whose countenance was gentle and placid as a ray of moonlight. Tige d'Amour, with the warm expressions of gratitude so congenial to a young and feeling mind, described the obligations he was under to his sweet companion. The amiable fairy was much moved at the recital; and as she fondly embraced and thanked the deliverer of her son, exclaimed, 'I know who you are; neither am I ignorant that the most acceptable proof I could give of my gratitude would be to restore you to the arms of a beloved parent. That is not in my power to do; for, between us fairies, there is a great degree of punctilio to be observed; and I could not counteract the works of your enemy without embroiling myself with the rest of my companions; nevertheless, I can procure you the means of conversing at pleasure with your parent. Say, then, into what form you would choose to be metamorphosed?' 'My dear madam, grant me, if you please, that of a little bird, and I can then hover near the window of my father, and at least have the delight of beholding him nearer than I have yet done.' 'A nightingale you shall be, lovely Belle-orange, and, every evening on your return, call on me, and your original figure shall be restored to you.' As the fairy spoke she became changed into the most beautiful nightingale, whose head was adorned with a plume of gold-coloured feathers, and a heart burning with sentiments of filial duty. She presently took wing towards the Tower of Sleep, where, through the crystal walls, she again beheld her imprisoned father. 'Oh,' exclaimed he, as she hovered in the air almost close to him, 'and shall I then never more behold my darling girl?' 'My father, see I am here. Oh, look at your own Belle-orange, and do not weep thus, for I am near you!' 'What is it which calls upon me?' 'A little nightingale;

look at it for it is your affectionate daughter.' 'And is it indeed possible, my child, that the malevolent Rouse has thus metamorphosed you?' 'No, no, my dear papa; it is one of my best friends who has conferred this favour to procure me the happiness of beholding you at a less cruel distance than I have yet been able to do.' The tender father appeared nearer to the walls of crystal, and the poor little bird putting its beak through one of the crevices left to admit the air, had the inexpressible delight of being once more fondly embraced by a grateful parent. The near approach of night forced our sweet nightingale from her loved society; and she flew back to the house of her new friends, received her own form, and again joined her wondering grandmother, to whom she related her marvellous adventures. For many days she had the satisfaction of frequent conversations with her father, and as the little boy and girl loved each other, as if they had been brother and sister, it was an agreeable half-way house for the nightingale. One day, as the father and daughter were sweetly conversing together, the wicked fairy entered the apartment. 'Ah you little wretch,' exclaimed she, 'so you have taken the figure of a bird to counteract me, but you shall perish for your boldness.' The wicked creature then began to throw stones at the trembling bird, whom by her power she prevented from flying off. Ayamar caught the arm of his enemy, conjuring her to spare his darling. 'No,' replied she, 'nothing can save her life but your consenting immediately to unite your fate with mine, for otherwise I will let forth a flying dragon who will devour her instantly.'

Ayamar resisted, and already the dragon pursued the timid bird, who sought a refuge from spray to spray, and was on the point of becoming his prey. What a situation for a tender father to be a spectator of! and at that instant he determined to sacrifice his future peace to secure the life of his child; but as the assent to her proposal yet trembled on his tongue, he was relieved from the horror of his fate, by seeing the dragon fall dead to the ground; for the nightingale had again made use of the magic words which destroyed the enchantment; and in her agony she exclaimed, 'My

father, my father! Oh yet resist the arts of your enemy, my dear father!' These words, thrice pronounced, broke the enchantment, and the enraged fury now let loose a monstrous hawk. The fluttering bird again called on her parent, and the hawk immediately shared the same fate as his predecessor by falling lifeless to the earth. The next messenger was a flying serpent, who met with as little success as the former ones had done. The fairy, half distracted at the failure of her vengeance, now snatched up a gun, which would take effect at the distance of forty miles. The wretch drew the trigger and aimed it at the affrighted victim, who in the moment of her distress thought that if she could break the tower of glass, perhaps all enchantments would end; and taking up a large stone, which weighed above twenty pounds (for all birds of the same description with Belle-orange preserve their original strength), she threw it at the distance of two miles on the Tower of Sleep, and to her inexpressible delight she saw it crushed to atoms. The amiable mother of Tige d'Amour, who had been long observing the combat in the air between the flying monster and the affrighted nightingale, drove off in her chariot of gold and diamonds, into which she received the elegant Aymar, who without this kind assistance would in all likelihood have perished in the sparkling ruins of the crystal palace, and carried him to her own hospitable roof. She then returned for the interesting nightingale, who still hovered round the spot, enjoying the despair of the fairy Rouse, whom she had last left occupied in endeavours to mend the glassy prison. Tige d'Amour received with rapture this amiable society, and the lovely Bell-orange was restored to her original form. 'I have,' said the benevolent fairy, 'drawn myself into a very disagreeable situation with your enemy; but my conscience would not allow me to behold her murder the beautiful creature who preserved the life of my son, without affording all the assistance in my power to counteract her wicked designs. You must wait my return in this house, where Rouse will not have the power to harm you during my absence; for I must set off for the council of fairies to impeach myself, and to demand a future

protection for you against the attacks of her malice hereafter. You shall be both warmly welcome to the hospitality my roof affords, and I trust, for the period of my absence, that my son will perform the honours of this house with the same attention and respect I could evince to those friends I so truly regard.' She now bid them adieu, and, during the days she was absent, her obliging son multiplied his endeavours to amuse them; and all which could give uneasiness was the recollection of the anxiety their beloved mother must unavoidably labour under, who would no doubt suppose them both dead, her granddaughter having failed in her promise of returning home for two evenings. Nor were they wrong in their conjectures, for the anxiety of the old lady was beyond all comparison, and the most favourable light in which imagination presented her granddaughter was that of a prisoner like her unhappy father. The attentive Tige d'Amour observing that the presence of their venerable relation was alone wanting to render his guests completely happy, sent a faithful dromedary to bring her to the arms of her adored children.

As it is impossible for words to do justice to the tenderness of this scene, I shall omit the description altogether, as hearts attached like theirs can only conceive the transports experienced by this happy party. At the end of two days the amiable fairy returned. 'My dear friends,' she said, 'I have succeeded to the utmost of my wishes; for you must know that, on my leaving home, I had no doubt but on my arrival at the council of the fairies I should find that Rouse had been there before me; and, in truth, she had brought her complaint of my having transgressed the laws by which we fairies are bound. I then recounted the circumstances to them, and concluded my appeal by observing, that if the heavens had granted us more power than to the rest of mortals, it was only to make us useful to mankind, by rendering them all the good we were capable of, and not to torment and plunge them into misery by the exercise of an authority which, so abused, would render us detestable. In short, I convinced them that our comrade would have punished my charming little friend for that virtue which ought ever to

meet with applause and reward; and when I painted the arduous task which the filial tenderness of Belle-orange had made her undertake, her patience, her constancy, and the danger to which she exposed herself in again beholding her imprisoned father, I saw tears of pleasure spring to the eyes of our old president, who shed so many as to form a little rivulet, which now flows in her neighbourhood.

‘In short, the fairy Rouse was humiliated and confounded, and, after receiving a just reprimand, she was ordered to retire; and I am made the bearer of a masque, on which may be traced all the virtues which ornament your exalted soul; and whenever the fairy again annoys you with her persecutions, apply it to your face, as nothing is more disgusting to the eyes of the vicious than the calm and tranquil aspect of virtue. You will see that, on beholding it, she will fly from you with terror and dismay. I have now to propose that, at a future period, you will permit me to hope that my son may become the husband of the inestimable Belle-orange; and, till that happy time does arrive, let us continue to look on each other as already united by the most tender and endearing of all ties.’

Thus spoke the good fairy, when her godfather, the enchanter Caraffom, who had taught the pike to warn Belle-orange of the confinement her father laboured under, now joined the interesting society; and, during the course of his life, Aymar had never more than once occasion to try the effects of the miraculous masque which was sent him to repulse the attacks of the unworthy Rouse, who never lost her wish of making herself his wife.

A few years after Tige d’Amour became the happy husband of the beautiful Belle-orange, who for a long time kept her bells and sticks as a memento of the difficulties and torments which the exertion of filial tenderness had cost her, and of which she ever continued the most amiable model.

This story will teach you, my children, that our parents are the most perfect earthly representatives of the Divine Being, and that it is our duty to run every risk, even to the hazard of our lives, to add to the comfort, and if in our power to preserve in happiness the lengthened days, of those so precious to us.

EVENING THE TWELFTH.

WE had been amusing ourselves in castle-building with an old pack of cards our grandmamma had given out for the purpose of keeping us quiet ; and it is impossible to express the delight we experienced in this innocent occupation : but well knowing the vivacity of my brother Thomas, all united in their endeavours to keep him at a distance from the fragile edifice. He murmured, and, in a playful manner, threatened its destruction. This we disregarded, and in an unlooked-for moment he mischievously shook the table on which stood the tottering fabric. In a moment it fell to pieces, and anger gaining entire dominion of our little breasts, we each revenged ourselves on the culprit, who, after having undergone a slap from one, a pinch from a second, and a kick from the third, at length got a moment for himself, in which he scrambled up all the scattered fragments which had formed the admired buildings, and tore them into a thousand pieces ; at the same time exclaiming, ' I am determined, as you have served me in this manner, none of you shall have the cards any more to play with.' My grandmamma now coming in, put an end to his harangue ; and she was saluted by the cries of one, and the tears of another, whilst all were clamorous in the earnestness and haste with which we denounced our mischievous brother.

The old lady reproached him for his conduct, observing, in accents of gentle reproof, that had he been contented to play as we did, he would have been admitted to a share of the amusement ; ' but,' continued she, ' you rather preferred destroying it completely, than to be at the trouble of convincing them that you would quietly unite your labours in the occupation which would so highly have gratified you altogether ; but it is always thus with the unworthy, who have no higher felicity than destroying the enjoyments of others, in which their own unhappy disposition renders them incapable of assimilating with satisfaction. But you will have an example of this truth in the history I am now about to give you.'

Story the Twelfth.

THE HISTORY OF BRIMBORION.

There was a little boy, about eleven years of age, who was so extremely diminutive in his figure, that they had given him that appellation as most appropriate ; for he was not taller than a boot, but what he wanted in height he made up in wickedness, for he was mischievous, and full of tricks as a monkey. Having had the misfortune, at an early age, to lose his parents, he was taken under the protection of his godmother, a very amiable fairy, named Berliquette, who one day calling him to her said, 'Attend to the instructions I am about to give you : know that I have ever loved you as my own son, because you possess a good understanding, if you could be induced to make a proper use of it. You read well, write a good hand, and are clever at accounts ; but, alas ! my dear, I am sorry to observe your heart is not so amiable as one might hope, from the natural good sense you are in possession of : but follow my advice, and you will become gentle, humane, and of course agreeable to every body. Think you not that it must be more flattering to excite sentiments of approbation, than those of dislike and aversion ? It is my purpose at this time to dive to the very bottom of your character ; and, if I discover you to be worthy of my esteem and regard, you shall be made happy, with all the benefits it is in my power to bestow. In which case I have already selected, as the partner of your life, a young person who is in possession of twenty caskets filled with rubies, the smallest of which is the size of an egg ; but for the present take this ring, which will procure you the gift of the fairies, for, while you have it on, every thing you can wish will be immediately accomplished ; and I desire you to observe, that, when your actions are dictated by motives of benevolence and humanity, your figure will become bright and blooming as the most beautiful rose ; but if, on the contrary, your wishes are the offspring of other sentiments, your face will be as yellow as a lemon, and frightful to every beholder. But now go into the world, and do not hope to see me again till I call upon you ; so

that, let your difficulties be ever so great, it will be useless for you to return ; for, this very day, my house, these woods and fields, as well as myself, will be rendered invisible to you, so that in case you should be tempted to return, I give you notice, that not a single vestige will be discoverable of your old friend or her habitation. So for the present I shall bid you adieu ; be a good boy, and we shall have a happy meeting ; but should you persevere in wickedness, dread the time of our re-union.' He embraced his godmother, and in a very ill humour departed, grumbling all the way at the fairy for having thus sent him out in pursuit of adventures.

After having proceeded a few paces, he turned to look about him, but no longer did he behold the house of his godmother, even the very face of the country appeared changed ; nor did he recognise one of the objects by which he was now surrounded. 'This is a charming plan, truly !' muttered he, as he walked on ; 'what can my godmother want to make of me, I wonder ? She must already be convinced that I am very sensible, amiable, and gentle as a lamb ; too much so, indeed, for my own good ; for it is not I who occasion any dispute with my playfellows ; no, on the contrary, it is they who plague and worry me ; which cannot fail sometimes to put one in a little kind of passion, but naturally I am the sweetest disposition in the world.' It is thus, my dear boys, that a violent and mischievous person ever reasons with himself ; removing to others those circumstances which are blamable in his own conduct ; when, in reality, it is their own evil disposition which torments all who have the misfortune to have any connection with them. Towards the close of the day the wandering boy found himself near a farmhouse, where he saw much bustle, and many persons going in and coming out. His nose at the same time was regaled by the most savoury smells, and, being extremely hungry, he determined to request some supper and a night's lodging. Accordingly he knocked at the door, and an old man opening it civilly said, 'What are your commands, my child ?' 'I fear, sir, you will not grant my wishes, but, at such an hour, what

should I presume to solicit but hospitality for a night.' 'Indeed, I am very sorry, my good little man, it should happen so unlucky, but I cannot oblige you, for you must know my son was married this morning, and has invited such a number of guests to my cottage, that I know not how to lodge them all: had I not been thus situated, I would have received you with pleasure; but go forward, and you will soon find, I doubt not, some place to sleep in, so good night.' The farmer shut the door, and the passionate disappointed boy exclaimed, 'Go, you old fellow, I wish the devil had you, and all your company who were at the wedding.' In a moment he heard a strange kind of noise under the earth, out of which seemed to proceed a legion of infernals, who broke open the old man's doors, dragged out the bride and bridegroom, the father and mother, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, and cousins; in short, all whom the wedding had brought together. The terrified boy, alarmed at the fulfilment of his wish, began to run with all possible speed from so terrific a sight; an exercise which he continued till the early dawn of morning.

On venturing to look about him, he perceived himself on the borders of a most beautiful canal, on the clear bosom of which floated many barges, gaily decked with flowers and different coloured flags embroidered with gold. In each were spread tables covered with ices, cakes, fruits, jelly, and the most delicious confectionery. During the time he was contemplating with delight these elegant preparations, he saw above sixty persons advancing, men, women, and children, all dressed in white, and ornamented with the gayest ribbons. Joy was a visible attendant on this lovely group, over whom seemed to preside a man at least a hundred years old, who was affectionately supported by some of the younger branches of the company. Brimborion stopped a person to inquire whither they were all going. 'To a beautiful island,' returned the man to whom the question had been addressed, 'about a mile from hence, to celebrate the hundredth birthday of that venerable old gentleman you see, of whom we are all descendants.' 'Pray take me along with you,' exclaimed the little intruder.

‘O yes, truly, what do you think should induce us to take such a little dwarf as you into our party, especially as we know nothing about you? but I should judge, from the colour of your skin, which is as yellow as a lemon, that you must be dying.’ In truth, since he had brought that misfortune on the family of the inoffensive farmer, his countenance had become disgusting in a degree, and, in his frenzy of passion, he insisted upon getting into one of the boats, from which he was effectually repulsed, and being provoked at beholding the company embark, and glide down the smooth unruffled stream, to the sound of the sweetest music, he wickedly exclaimed, ‘What would I not give to see a storm come on, which would sink the boats and drown them all.’ In the same moment the sky became overspread with clouds, the thunder rolled, and the vivid lightning darted on the floating streamers of the pleasure barges, which threatened each moment to be sinking under the rolling waves, which foamed against their sides, and loud and piercing shrieks issued from the terrified passengers. The rain fell in such torrents that, to save himself from the fury of the tempest, Brimborion sought refuge in an old deserted ruin, which marked that it had once been the abode of some human being, by the fragments of an old table, a wooden chair, and a small looking glass. No sooner had he beheld the reflection of his countenance, than he observed it became more and more disfigured, and in terror he recollected the words of his godmother, which brought torrents of tears from his eyes. ‘Ah!’ exclaimed he, in an agony of remorse, ‘how barbarous I have been, in having thus sacrificed the lives of so many to the unpardonable impetuosity of my wishes. If this spot were a hermitage, I would confine myself to it for life, as a just punishment for the crimes I have been guilty of.’ As he spoke, he saw raised by the side of the ruin a small chapel. ‘Ah,’ said he, ‘here is a pretty little church indeed, but, as I do not mean to be a clergyman, I should prefer turning a spit in a good kitchen.’ This new wish was immediately accomplished; a large fire appeared in the middle of the ruins, and before it many spits, on which there appeared the finest hares,

poultry, and dainties of every description; but the meat seemed raw, and the spits immovable, as if they waited to be turned. 'What a fool I should be,' said he, 'to think of getting my bread by work, when it is in my power to provide myself with so many good things by means of this ring; but I am not cook enough to be always turning the spit, and if these good things were ready, I should be very glad to eat them.' The roast meat now gave out a most relishing smell, and its colour announcing it to be perfectly ready, he sat down to a most excellent dinner, and then prepared to walk to a fine field of corn at the back of his new abode, near which was situated a most superb mansion. On advancing towards it he met a poor ragged old woman, who in pitiful terms asked charity: her miserable appearance worked on his feelings, and he exclaimed, 'How many wretched creatures are thus pining in poverty, while that splendid house announces only riches and prosperity to its more fortunate possessor, where this poor wretch, perhaps, in vain solicits a morsel of bread at the gate of luxury! How glad I should be were she in possession of some part of that wealth, which the master of yon rich domain can so well spare to the necessities of his fellow-creatures!' 'Bless me!' cried the old beggar, 'what can I have so heavy in my pockets!' and she began to fumble in them, drawing out such quantities of money as astonished her. 'Keep it, mother,' said Brimborion, 'and be happy.' The woman retired, uttering a thousand blessings on him for his benevolence. He continued his walk towards the cornfield, but, before he entered, a gentleman approached in a most violent passion, having rushed from the splendid mansion. 'I am robbed,' cried he, 'my treasure is taken from me, and all my money has been stolen.' 'You have not been robbed,' replied the author of his misfortune; 'the surplus of your riches has only passed into the pockets of another, who is more in want of it than you can be.' 'You little wretch, you are in league with the rogues, but you shall suffer for this, notwithstanding you are as fresh and as blooming as the roses in my garden.'

Brimborion was delighted to hear this good action had made so material an alteration in his complexion, and in an

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insulting manner he laughed at the gentleman, exclaiming, 'Don't stand here talking about your money, or you will lose your dog. He immediately looked round, and beheld his favourite dog caught in a trap, which had been set for some hares, making the most lamentable cries and grimaces. The little urchin took this opportunity of making his escape, and entering the field he was hid by the tall wheat, where many reapers were employed in cutting down the luxuriant grain. 'What o'clock is it?' said he to one of them. 'Look, partner, look here,' said he, instead of answering his question, 'at that little dwarf, who seems to take me for a sundial; why, he is not higher than my leg, and as yellow as a daffy-down-dilly.' 'You are a liar,' said the angry child, 'for my face is as blooming as a rose.' 'Oh! yes, you are a beautiful creature to be sure.' 'You are a set of impudent rascals, and I should be glad to see this field of wheat consumed to a heap of cinders, which to pick would be employment good enough for such wretches as you are.' At the same moment his wish was accomplished, the beautiful prospect before him vanished, and the rich and luxuriant field became disfigured with heaps of ashes and cinders: the reapers flew after him, and he would, without doubt, have fallen a prey to their fury, had he not escaped into a large town, which he entered about sunset. The boy was now of the brightest gold colour, and every person fled from him, as they would have done from the plague. 'What brutes all these people are,' said he, in his passion; 'it seems as if they had never seen a stranger in their town before; it would serve them right for laughing at me, if they were all to become of the same colour as myself.' What a wonderful transition struck his eyes; all the passengers were quite yellow, and immediately guessing this misfortune had been occasioned by the dwarf, armed with sticks and cudgels they followed to give him the chastisement he so well deserved. 'Ah!' said he, with a tone of defiance, 'take care, or I shall set fire to your town, and change you all into —.' He had not time to finish the sentence, when he found himself drawn up by the hair, and the marvellous ring fell from his hands. 'Wicked one,' said the fairy, for it was

she who had thus snatched him from the earth; 'did you suppose it was to injure mankind that I bestowed the gift of the fairies upon you? Fortunately, I have had it in my power to remedy all the evils you have occasioned. Invisible I followed you everywhere, and immediately applied my remedy to the destruction you would have brought on others. But let us now take a review of the heinous actions you have been guilty of. In the first place, because a worthy man really had it not in his power to accommodate you under his roof, you sent a legion of devils to torment him and his family; but I saved those good people from the gripe of the demons you had conjured up, and they are again peaceably restored to their family comforts. Another party, who were going to celebrate with a little entertainment the hundredth birthday of their venerable father, you would have plunged without mercy into all the horrors of a watery grave, because they refused to admit a stranger into the bosom of their domestic rejoicings; but I had myself the pleasure of conducting them to the fortunate island, where they are at this moment enjoying all the felicity that results from the fulfilment of filial and fraternal goodness. The old beggar woman is no longer in possession of the ill-gotten wealth which you so unthinkingly bestowed upon her, and which she did not merit, and has not kept. However, as a reward for that single trait of misplaced sensibility, your figure took the bloom of the opening rose, but it was lost at the moment you insulted him whom you had before injured, because he with reason complained of the loss you had made him suffer; and you also caused his favourite dog to be entangled in a snare—a barbarous action, as the poor animal could never have disoblged or injured you. Your next step was to consume a field of corn, and by that means have robbed the poor men of their honest and industrious employment; and, last of all, to sum up the whole catalogue of your crimes, you would have ended by burning an entire town. This was too much, wicked boy; and, to prevent your doing any more mischief, I shall condemn you to remain a hundred years by this chimney corner,' for they had now reached the habitation of the fairy. She then put him on the mantel-piece, where he

suddenly lost his speech, and became transformed into a china monkey, who continued to shake, without ceasing, his hands and feet. He remained there for a hundred years; at the expiration of which time he was broke, and died. All the visitors of the fairy looked with astonishment at this singular ornament on her mantel-piece. 'It is my godson, Brimboration, whom I snatched from society because he could not bear to see pleasure in which he was not allowed to partake, the happiness of others being poison to his malicious heart, which was never satisfied but in the practice of malevolent and wicked actions.'

EVENING THE THIRTEENTH.

My grandmamma had one day promised that we should have sweetmeats for our suppers; but she added, they would only be bestowed on those who in the course of the morning had, by their good behaviour, given her the most satisfaction. It may easily be supposed that our attention and care was redoubled to secure the reward we were so anxious to attain; but our little brother Francis, in order to secure a larger portion of the good things for his own consumption, thought to make his court by recapitulating all the errors we had been guilty of. 'My brother Adolphus stole some cheese, grandmamma; Thomas beat Henry, and John cracked a great many of the walnuts you had reserved for the winter.' Grandmamma listened to all he had to say without making any reply; but at supper time, when she distributed her raspberry jam amongst us, Francis was astonished to find himself the only one who was excluded from the treat. 'So you thought, I suppose, sir, to gain my favour by becoming the accuser of your brothers; but I have found out that you are an informer, and that is a character I shall never countenance. Your duty should lead you to make excuses for the faults of others, since yourself are subject every hour in the day to be guilty of the same; and how much better should I have thought you, had you made the attempt to screen them from my anger, instead of being the first person to tell me of their faults; and as a

punishment for doing so, you must this night be content to make your supper of dry bread, whilst you see the other boys regaling themselves with a repast your ill conduct has excluded you from partaking of.

‘I am now going to recount the history of two brothers, one of whom conducted himself in a manner very different from what you have done.’

Story the Thirteenth.

THE WHITE WOLF ; OR, THE LITTLE RED SLIPPERS.

There was once a very rich lady who had been twice married, and was now again a widow with two sons. By her first union she had a boy, named Gingeolet, whom a wicked fairy had vowed to persecute for some time. By her second husband she had a little boy, called Petit Bonnet, who was protected in his cradle by a good fairy. These brothers loved each other with such perfect affection, that whatever afflicted the one, immediately became the source of sorrow to the other. It happened that the youngest was his mother's favourite ; and one day, the housekeeper being ill, at a villa a little way from the town, she sent Gingeolet with some little niceties for the invalid. He went, and two days passed without his having returned home ; during which period the following circumstance occurred. He had amused himself with gathering and cracking the nuts which hung so temptingly in his road. Whilst thus amused, he beheld a white wolf run towards him, who said, ‘Gingeolet, I shall eat you if you do not immediately resign to me the cakes and other good things you have in that little basket.’ ‘Why, sir, you are not sick, and therefore cannot want such niceties.’ ‘Well, then, I shall eat you first, and that afterwards.’ Gingeolet saw it was useless in him to hesitate, and therefore resigned his charge to his gluttonous enemy ; but well knowing he must not return to the house of his mamma, after having so ill executed her commands, he lay stretched on the grass bathed in tears, and not knowing what part to act. During the time he was so distressfully occupied, much

uneasiness had been experienced at the house of his mother ; but, above all, his little brother regretted this long separation. The second night, during which his tears and cries prevented him from taking any repose, he heard a soft voice say, 'Put on to-morrow morning the little slippers you will find under your bed ; they will go twenty feet for one, and will carry you to that brother whose loss you mourn.' Petit Bonnet was much astonished to find the most beautiful pair of little red shoes in the place described. They were immediately put on, and his astonishment augmented at finding he took such gigantic strides, and was conducted to the wood in which he found Gingeolet, who recounted the imprudence he had been guilty of, in amusing himself by cracking nuts when he ought to have gone forward on his business, and the threats of the animal who had robbed him of that which had been entrusted to his care. 'Remain where you are,' said his kind little brother, kissing him tenderly, 'and I will remedy that misfortune ;' so saying he hastened to the town, and brought a fresh supply of articles for the housekeeper ; then taking his brother by the hand, he conducted him to his mother, to whom he made an excuse for the absence of Gingeolet, which assuaged her anguish on this occasion. About a month after his mamma called him to her : 'Gingeolet,' said she, 'here is a basket filled with the choicest game, which I want you to carry to my country house, where I mean to give a dinner to some of my friends the day after to-morrow.' Gingeolet took the basket, which was very heavy, and departed, taking a contrary road to the wood in which he had met the white wolf. In his way he saw a party of little boys, who were idling away their time at cricket, and not being able to withstand the desire he felt to join their party, he put his basket on the ground, and diverted himself for so long a time, that night approached without his having perceived it.

He then took up his burden and began to run, terrified at having loitered about so long ; but the white wolf now came out directly upon him. 'Gingeolet,' said he, 'I am hungry, and must have all the game in your basket, unless you prefer I should eat you for my supper.' 'Wicked wolf,

what can I do to deter you from your purpose?' 'Nothing, for, if you refuse, I have only immediately to pick your bones.' 'There then, greedy, take it; but I am a ruined little boy.' The greedy wolf fell instantly on his prey, and Gingeolet, seating himself, began to cry most bitterly, when he beheld Petit Bonnet, who ran with the swiftness of a hare towards him. 'I was afraid, my dear brother, that some new misfortune had overtaken you.' 'Ah! yes, indeed,' sobbed he; 'that wicked wolf has again robbed me.' 'Never mind,' said the kind-hearted brother, 'I will repair all your losses;' and he ran to a shop, and procured as much game as the wolf had devoured, which he carried to the country-house, and then led Gingeolet to his mamma, who reproached him for having stayed so long on his errand; but Petit Bonnet again made his excuses, and all went right. At the end of eight days, Gingeolet was entrusted by his mother with some beautiful china tea-cups, which she was going to make a present of to a friend. 'If you break one of them,' said she, 'you had better never see my face again.' He went, and as it was a very sultry day, he stopped to rest on the borders of a river by which he was to pass. Curiosity led him to examine them one after another, during which the wolf made his appearance. 'Gingeolet,' said he, 'have you anything for me to eat to-day.' 'No, glutton, I have only some cups and saucers; and you do not eat china, I suppose.' 'No, for which reason I must now satisfy myself with picking your bones.' He darted towards him, and Gingeolet strove to make his escape; when the beast, furious to satisfy his hunger, jumped into the middle of his beautiful porcelain, which was broken into a thousand pieces; and in another moment the trembling boy must have become the victim to his ferocious antagonist, had not Petit Bonnet arrived with his red slippers, and throwing his breakfast to the wolf, he immediately ran into the fields. 'I feared,' said he, 'some accident would befall you; but, Heaven be praised! I came in time to save your life; but where are the cups and saucers?' 'There they lie, crumbled all to pieces by the feet of that vile wolf.' 'This is indeed unlucky, for I fear I have not near money

enough to replace them ; but come home, and I will make your excuses.' The brothers accordingly went to their mamma, to whom Petit Bonnet, who well knew the ascendancy he had on the heart of his mother, accused himself of having broken the cups in playing with his brother ; and his sighs and tears had such an effect upon her, that he was instantly pardoned, and the true culprit escaped without censure. Some little time after, this severe parent said to her eldest son, 'Gingeolet, you must go two miles from hence, and fetch home my little god-daughter, whom I shall take from the nurse, the poor woman being ill, and incapable of the charge ; so take care no accident happens to her, or you will answer for it with your life.' 'Yes, mamma, I will take all possible care of her.' Behold Gingeolet going on his travels ; and for this time he did not stop till he had reached the cottage of the nurse, to whom he presented a letter from his mother, and was directly invested with the charge of the little girl, with whom he now set off on his return home ; sometimes making her walk, for she was about four years old, and other times carefully placing her on his back ; but the wish of amusing her got the better of his prudence, and, placing her on the grass, he began to gather flowers, which having done, they must next be tied into nosegays ; and taking the little creature on his lap, he caressed her with the greatest tenderness, and was singing a little song, when he saw the white wolf run towards them : 'Holloa !' cried the beast, 'you need not run away ; for it is impossible you can be saved, the smell of fresh blood having regaled my nose at more than three miles distance ; so you must absolutely give me that little girl that I may eat her.' 'Not for the universe would I be so wicked.' 'Why, then, I shall eat you both, but I must begin with her. Oh, how I shall regale myself on such fine flesh and blood !' In a moment he carried his threats into execution, and notwithstanding the resistance of the agonized Gingeolet, the poor little creature was swallowed in a mouthful by the gluttonous animal. He was almost frantic on beholding this catastrophe, and fell without motion to the earth, an unresisting prey to the white wolf, who was preparing to devour him,

when Petit Bonnet appeared on the other side of a deep river, on the banks of which the little folks had so unfortunately stopped to amuse themselves. On beholding the danger his beloved brother was in, and there being no boat in which he could be ferried across, he resolved to plunge in, and make the best of his way to the opposite shore, when, owing to the marvellous effects of his red slippers, he remained perfectly upright in the water, and walked as if he had been on dry ground. The great steps he took brought him in a moment to the side of his brother, who was yet extended on the grass. 'Ah!' cried he to the wolf; 'get you gone, this moment, or you shall repent your impudence.' The beast looked at him with astonishment, but did not make any reply. Petit Bonnet embraced his brother, and his endeavours were so successful, that in a short time his senses were restored. 'Ah!' cried he, on opening his eyes, 'my dear brother, she is eat.' 'Ah! what a dreadful misfortune, and he is now looking at us; but fly, you villain, or I will be the death of you.' So saying, the courageous little boy, who would have sacrificed his own life to save that of his brother, took one of his slippers, and threw at the head of the naughty wolf, whom, to the astonishment of them both, they beheld fall dead at their feet. In a moment they had the most miraculous proof of the effects so fortunately resulting from the red slippers: the body of the wolf disappeared, and they beheld in its place the little girl stretched on a bed of roses, on which she appeared profoundly sleeping. Petit Bonnet, fearing she might be dead, gently shook her, and the little creature began to smile on beholding him. At the same instant a beautiful lady, elegantly dressed, in a chariot drawn by six flying snails, appeared. 'I am,' said she, 'the fairy Bonasse, who have protected Petit Bonnet from the first moment of his existence, and gave him courage to save his brother, and avert the enchantments of the fairy Ripopett, his most cruel enemy, the white wolf being only a phantom, created on purpose to torment him, and to make him fall into a net spread to entrap him; for her power was only in force when he deserved punishment for any fault he might have committed, such as being idle,

dilatory, or playful at those times when he should have attended solely to the commands of his mother ; but all this is past, the white wolf is destroyed, and the fairy Ripopett has lost her talisman : so come, my dears, into my carriage, and I will convey you to your mamma.' The little ones were now placed by her side, and they arrived in safety at the house of their mother, to whom she recounted all the assistance the good little Petit Bonnet had been able to afford his brother, who was so unfortunate as to labour under the power of the malignant fairy. His mother was enchanted by such interesting details ; she thanked the amiable fairy, gave good advice to Gingeolet, and redoubled her affection to her dear Petit Bonnet, whom she extolled to all her friends as the amiable model of fraternal tenderness.

You will see in this story, my children, a brother of the most affectionate description, and not a little informer like Mr. Francis : he, on the contrary, remedied those evils his brother's heedlessness had brought upon him ; and, when it was not in his power to do this, even took upon himself the faults of which Gingeolet alone was guilty. So good a lesson should serve you, my children, as an example by which you cannot fail to learn that attachment, indulgence, and complacency between brothers are the first links of friendship which unite men in society.

EVENING THE FOURTEENTH.

My grandmamma entered the room, holding an open letter in her hand. 'Which of you boys is it,' said she, 'that has given rise to a report that your mamma was going to be married again ?' I replied, 'Henry has told us so, grandmamma ; and, on hearing the intelligence, John had the assurance to say that he should never love a new papa, let him be ever so good to him.' 'This was said, I suppose, because he did not choose to have a father who would possess a just authority over him ; and in this point his wishes are accomplished. It is not true that my daughter ever had such an intention. In the letter you see I have in

my hand, she informed me of some proposals she has received, but adds she will not listen to any of the gentlemen who have made them, in the determination of preserving herself entirely for her children; and declares she will never give them a second parent, who would not partake of the tenderness she feels for her fatherless babes. So you see, my children, you did not comprehend the right sense of a letter so full of tenderness towards you, and which you before heard me read aloud. John was very blamable in the expressions he made use of; for, had it been really as you apprehended, the duty and respect you owe to so good a mamma should have induced you to make use of every effort to merit the good opinion of any husband she may think proper to unite herself to, even were he to be a person unworthy the distinction she had conferred upon him; for in no case whatever ought children to sit in judgment on the actions of those they are bound by the strongest ties to respect and obey. But this circumstance brings to my mind a story which will be a good lesson to you all in future.'

Story the Fourteenth.

THE OLD GREY CAT.

There was a lady so old that her infirmities obliged her to be carried from one room to another on her sofa. She had once a son, but he had been sometime dead, and had left to mourn his loss, three little orphan children, a boy and two girls: but the old lady had for some time conceived so great a dislike to her innocent descendants, that she would not consent to see them; and, not satisfied with robbing them of her tenderness, she had also determined on disinheriting them by marrying again, and leaving her fortune to her husband. It was perfect madness in the old woman to entertain such an idea, and her amiable grandchildren lamented her weakness of intellects, which they attributed to her advanced age, and the imbecility which that had brought on her senses. Theodore had already attained his twentieth year, and procured a living by the exercise of his genius as a

painter, by which occupation he contrived to procure for his two sisters, who lived with him, the comforts of life, and also the proper instruction so necessary at their age, at a distance from the habitation of their unnatural parent, who never troubled herself to make any inquiries about these interesting young people. In the same town, and within a few doors of the old lady, lived a well-looking young man, of genteel address but of a bad character, for he was a spendthrift and a gamester. He had not profited by the good advice which had been given him in his childhood, but had associated himself with bad company which had brought him to the brink of bankruptcy. He was a watchmaker by profession, and the old lady sent him one day her gold repeater, set round with brilliants, to repair. The beauty of this antique trinket made him wish to become possessed of it ; for, thinks he, was it but turned into money, it would at least quiet some of my most clamorous creditors. The servant roused him from his reverie, by asking him if he chose to undertake the repair of it. 'I beg your pardon, sir,' said he, 'for my inattention to you ; but really I was so struck with the beauty of this watch, that I could not resist the inclination I had to examine it; for it is but a very few who can, in these times, afford to keep by them such an article of luxury.' 'Oh! as to that,' replied the servant, pleased to have an opportunity of telling the follies of his mistress, 'my mistress is very old ; she is possessed of five thousand a year, which she has not health to spend, and yet has a fancy to marry again.' 'Has she no relations, who will spend it for her?' replied Mr. Minute, for that was the watchmaker's name. 'She has but a nephew and two nieces, and she has somehow taken a dislike to them, and forbid them her house.' The watchmaker was satisfied with this information, and promised to bring the watch home in a few days. He was so depraved that, at first, he was resolved to take the watch and to quit the town, never to return ; but, after revolving the conversation of the old lady's servant in his mind, he concluded to pay his court to her ; and as the repeater would insure him an introduction, he was resolved not to let such a good opportunity slip him.

Accordingly, in a few days (the watch being repaired) he waited on the old lady, dressed in his best clothes, and played his part so well, that, before he quitted, she gave him a positive promise that she would become his as soon as he could procure the licence, and generously paid him for the repair of the watch with a purse of guineas. They were married in a day or two. The old lady did not even settle anything on herself, consequently her deserving relatives were also quite forgot.

Mr. Minute had just attained his thirtieth year, and his blooming bride wanted a month of seventy-two. It may therefore be reasonably guessed, that the young man's only motive for marrying was the old lady's money ; and his first wish after the ceremony was for some lucky chance to get rid of her. He was so very ungrateful in return for the unbounded confidence she had placed in him, that he secretly wished she might tumble down the church steps and break her neck ; and I doubt not but he would have given her a sly push, had he not have been in fear that her injured relations would have made a strict inquiry into it.

The amiable Theodore, who was ignorant of all that had passed at the house of his grandmother, almost killed himself with the exertions he made to educate and support his sisters, and, notwithstanding the injustice of her conduct, he strove to inspire in their young minds respect for the mother of their father. One day, as it was the first of the year, not to be wanting in respect, he thought it his duty to go and wish his grandmother many happy ones. He knocked at the door, and the porter inquired if he wished to see his master? 'What master do you mean?' 'The husband of my mistress, to be sure.' 'The husband of your mistress? Why, is it possible she should be married?' The porter was a stranger to the person of Theodore, and replied, 'Why should she not? It is better that a good generous man like Mr. Minute should profit by her riches, than that they should ever be enjoyed by those she does not care about.' From this intelligence, Theodore became convinced that he was disinherited, and that his sisters were thrown unprotected on an unfeeling world ; while the for-

tunes of his family would by this step most certainly come into the possession of a stranger. Overcome with this chagrin and sorrow he left the door, his head bent to the ground, and his arms crossed on his breast. 'It is not on my own account,' thought he, 'that I thus regret the loss of so much wealth; but my poor sisters, how will they ever be established in life; for much I fear my feeble talents will soon fail of giving support to so many? Ah! my unhappy grandmother, how unjustly have you thought of those who would have rendered your life as comfortable as duty and affection could make it, had they been permitted to have done so.' Lost in thought he wandered out of his road, and on recovering himself he found he was on the banks of a river, where he observed many persons collected together looking at something in the water. 'What is the matter?' exclaimed he; 'has any accident occurred?' 'No, it is only a poor cat,' said one of the spectators, 'some one has thrown into the river, and he cannot save himself, his fore-paws being fastened together, and a stone tied round his neck.' 'Ah! perhaps the poor animal is mad.' 'Not at all; his master who came himself to drown him, said that he did so because it was old, infirm, and disagreeable.' 'Poor creature,' said the compassionate youth, 'and is that a reason, because he is now advanced at the period to which we all look forward with hope and expectation, that the good qualities and the graces of his youth should be forgotten, and his life become the sacrifice to that which is certainly no fault of his; but where is the animal?' 'Do you not see that it is struggling in vain to creep out, and must shortly sink?' 'Poor thing, it shall if possible be saved,' said he, jumping, as he spoke, into the river, from which he brought the cat, which he set at liberty from the strings by which it was bound, and carried it more dead than alive home with him, where by his own cares, added to those so humanely bestowed by his sisters, it was soon restored to its original state, by giving it warm milk and nursing it with the greatest kindness. When the old cat recovered his senses, and had dried his wet coat by a blazing fire, his young friends were surprised to see how deplorably ugly it was; and any one possessing less

humanity than themselves, would have turned it out into the street to seek its fortune. And now that they were disengaged from their attentions from the miserable cat, and seeing it sit purring by their side, the affectionate brother informed his sisters of the marriage of their relation with a young man who would doubtlessly inherit all her fortune ; and, notwithstanding the cruelty of her conduct, the three disinterested, though afflicted, children earnestly prayed that their poor infatuated grandmamma might be happy with the person she had made choice of ; though the more inquiries they made into his character and morals, the more reason they had to doubt the possibility of his treating her with kindness or consideration, and the industrious brother applied himself with increasing zeal to his profession ; but as at times he found it difficult to exercise his talents, his head and heart were occupied by the reflection of what might be his sisters' fate, and his eyes would often fill with tears. One day, as he was contemplating his misfortunes, he determined on going to this unjust old lady, and cast himself at her feet, not to reprocach her for her marriage, but to entreat her kindness and affection, without which blessing he thought they could not live in comfort. 'Oh ! if I could but unveil to her the depravity of that man she calls her husband, she might at least be guarded against his arts, and perhaps be snatched from future misery.' 'My dear master,' said the old grey cat, who was stretched out enjoying all the comforts of a warm hearth, 'do not be surprised at hearing me speak, for when I was in the river, from which you so kindly saved me, a little carp, who I have not the smallest doubt was a fairy, touched one of my paws, saying, 'I endow you with the gift of speech, and will do all that you may think proper to serve that good young man who will come and save your life.' 'And did a carp tell you this?' 'Yes, and I profit by its permission to give you some good advice ; so take me under your arm, and let us call on the husband of your grandmother, who does not know you by sight, and you shall see what we can accomplish.' Theodore, the astonished Theodore, took the miserable looking old beast under his arm, and doing as he had

been bid, soon gained an introduction to Mr. Minute. 'I am without fortune,' said he, 'but am in possession of a marvellous cat, who is gifted with speech, and has the means of procuring the most curious articles. Should you, sir, like to judge of its talents?' 'Willingly,' returned he, 'and am ready to reward you for your trouble.' 'My master,' said the cat, 'has in his pocket a small barrel made of gold, in which is enclosed a liquor which will fill a hundred thousand glasses, without the barrel ever becoming empty; show it, master.' Theodore fumbled in his pocket, from which, to his utter astonishment, he drew a gold barrel, about six times as long as his thumbs, from which he took a most delicious liquor. 'For how much would you sell this?' said the delighted Minute. 'For five hundred pounds it shall be yours.' 'Here is a check on my banker for the money, and the miraculous barrel is my own.' Theodore returned home with his faithful animal, and on the morrow, accompanied by the old Grey Cat, again visited Minute. 'My master,' said the cat, 'is in possession of a collar made of ten large rubies, of so wonderful a kind that, as fast as those precious stones are taken from it, others will immediately appear in the same settings. This is particularly convenient in case it should fall into the hands of thieves; for, were they to pick out the precious stones, the collar would continue the same. Master, show it to the gentleman.' Theodore, with augmented surprise, drew from his pocket this wonderful collar, and Minute in ecstasies agreed to purchase it for a thousand pounds. About eight days after he again appeared at the house of his grandmother; and the cat addressing Minute said, 'My master is the proprietor of a little picture, so wonderful in its kind as at command to retrace all the actions of a man's life: show it, my dear master.' Theodore found in his pocket a small picture, three thumbs by four, which represented a woman veiled, and Minute desired this portrait might bear the resemblance of his wife. Immediately the veiled lady disappeared, and the old grandmother was visible, her spectacles on her nose, and quietly taking a pinch of snuff. 'How much is the price of this?' cried the still more astonished Minute. 'Two

hundred pounds.' 'Here is your money. About a fortnight after Theodore returned to the house of his grandfather-in-law, and, by means of the old cat, exhibited a rose tree, which grew like any other in a pot, but produced flowers of gold in such quantities that, when one rose was plucked, twenty others appeared in its room. He gave two thousand pounds for it; and, about a month after, he purchased from the now rich Theodore a pitcher, made of free-stone, which, plunged in a bucket of water, filled continually with the finest gold and silver. At this exhibition, Minute was so charmed with the wonderful talents of Theodore, that he was invited to dinner on the next day; nor was this wonderful cat omitted. The appointed time arrived, and with his master the cunning old cat found a well-spread table, and a covered place for him next to the antiquated wife of their host. However this mark of distinction might have flattered, it did not turn him from his purpose. Every one took his seat, and the old cat enjoyed a comfortable chair before a good plate of meat; while the old lady conducted herself with affability towards her unknown grandson (whom for ten years she had not seen) and his grey cat. They talked, they joked, and the old cat was so full of pleasantry and information, that he was viewed with surprise and admiration by the assembled company. When the dessert was placed on the table, the master of the house, willing to astonish his guests, gave orders for his miraculous barrel to be produced. It came; and, wonderful to relate, when replaced on the table, it instantly became converted into the shell of a walnut. 'What,' exclaimed Minute, 'can this change mean? bring me immediately my ruby collar, which I will present to my wife.' It was produced, and as quickly changed into a cord full of knots. 'Ah!' said the mortified Minute, 'I am deceived; but let me see the miraculous rose bush.' It was accordingly set upon the table, and appeared only a pot filled with cinders. 'Do you take me for a fool,' said he, in a rage, 'that you serve ashes at my table? but I will know if the pitcher and pieces of gold are safe.' A servant presented them, and the jug, breaking in his hand, was found only to contain some dirty water,

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which totally spoiled the dresses of the ladies on whom it fell; and the passionate host exclaimed, 'One trial more I will have, and if that fails me, will tie this cord round the neck of that vile cat who has thus cheated me of my money.' The marvellous picture was now placed on the table, and the old cat engrossed the conversation, saying, 'As for this talisman, it is not changed, but will convince Mrs. Minute of the true character of her husband. So now observe, madam, all I am about to disclose, and see your husband give to younger women the many jewels and large sums of money your folly has bestowed upon him. The picture exhibited each scene which had passed since his marriage. Now see Mr. Minute, who has lost five thousand pounds, which he has paid, and a like sum for which he has passed his word of honour. Now behold Mr. Minute, overpowered with liquor, and in company with the most abandoned and profligate; but now observe how he is wishing for the death of his wife, that he may yet more freely enjoy her fortune unencumbered by an old woman.' At this the enraged Mr. Minute was about to speak, but to his inexpressible surprise, his tongue was immovable in his mouth, and the old cat continued: 'Behold now, on the contrary, the good Theodore, who is the grandson of Mrs. Minute, and the two lovely sisters of this amiable young man, who are now addressing their prayers to heaven for the health and prosperity of their misguided parent; and now see them, by the industry of their hands and the exertions of their talents with which heaven has blessed them, gaining a maintenance which the conduct of their nearest relation had deprived them of. Next you see the noble, the generous young man restore to his grandmother all those sums of money her spendthrift husband gave for the playthings that were offered to his inspection, which he thought more marvellous than they were, and thus would he in a very short time have completely ruined the old lady by his extravagance and folly, having already sold some of her estates, and made contracts for the remainder.' The old woman, bathed in tears, threw herself into the arms of her grandson, and restored him to her tender affections he so well merited. During the time

this scene was passing, Mr. Minute would have thrown the poor old grey cat out of the window, had he not been prevented by the entrance of a fairy, sparkling in gold and diamonds. 'I am,' cried she, on entering the assembly, 'the protectress of oppressed innocence, and having made a carp and a cat conducive to the happiness of the amiable Theodore, I am now come to employ my favourite puss in the punishment of a wicked deceiver, who introduced himself into a family in order to rob the legal inheritors of their splendid fortunes. The fairy struck Mr. Minute, who was instantly converted into a black rat, which the old cat made a spring at, and ate before the company as if it had been the bone of a fowl. Thus finishes the history; and Theodore with his fair sisters came to live at their grandmother's, where they continued till she sunk quietly into her grave, while her last breath was spent in blessing her amiable and dutiful children.

ELEMENTS OF MORALITY.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF CHRISTIAN GOTTHILF
SALZMAN, BY MARY WOLSTONCROFT.)

CHAPTER I.

IN the city of Bristol* lived once a merchant whose name was Jones. He was an honest, industrious man, and had been so attentive to business that, in the course of ten or twelve years, he acquired a considerable fortune, sufficient to procure not only the necessaries, but even the superfluities, of life. He had a flower-garden, and his house was decorated with various beautiful pictures; besides, he could afford, when he wished, to ride in a coach, to drink wine, and enjoy many pleasures which men may live contented without; therefore he was called a rich man.

But amongst the various beautiful things which he possessed, none were so dear to him as his wife and two children, Charles and Mary. After the fatigue of business, he always relaxed himself in their society; and a cheerful look from his wife, a kiss from his children, afforded him more delight than all his pictures. He seldom relished any pleasure without them, but was constantly endeavouring to contrive such amusements as were at the same time instructive. When he walked in his garden, or in the fields, before breakfast, to take the sweet morning air and hear the birds sing, or sought the cool shade in the evening, they generally accompanied him, unless the children had misbehaved; but this seldom happened, for they really were good, and though they had some of the faults common to children, yet they sincerely desired to please their parents and everybody. One day Mr. Jones was sitting with his wife and children by the side of a rivulet, eating cherries with them; he pointed to the fish as they sported in the

* In the original German the city is nameless; but the merchant is Herrmann, the wife Sophie, the children Ludwig and Luise.

water, and related many wonderful things of the animals which a gracious God had created to live in the water. He was interrupted by the sound of wheels.

The children eagerly listened, and looked wistfully up at their father's face, as it were to ask leave to run to the roadside to see the sight. He smiled, waved his hand, and away they both ran, and saw a beautiful coach drawn by four black prancing horses. 'Make haste, make haste,' cried the children; 'come and see this fine carriage!' Mr. Jones was willing to indulge them; but when the gentleman in the coach saw him advancing, he stopped it, and jumping out, caught Mr. Jones by the hand, and shook it cordially, saying, 'How glad I am thus accidentally to meet you, for I am now returning disappointed from your house, where I hoped to have found you.' Mr. Jones invited Sir William,* for he was a baronet, to sit down and partake of their little feast; but he excused himself, because his stomach was weak, and he was afraid of the evening air. 'I came,' added he, 'to request your company at my country seat tomorrow to celebrate my birthday, and I shall be happy to see Mrs. Jones and the children; I know she is ever unwilling to leave the little ones at home.' They began to smile, and made signs to each other, as much as to say, 'Yes, we shall go; our father will go and take us with him.' Mr. Jones, reading in the countenance of his wife, and the restrained laugh of the children, that they wished him to go, readily assented; and the children jumped for joy as they attended Sir William to the carriage.

They then returned and seated themselves again round the basket of cherries, and could talk of nothing but the pleasure they expected the next day.

Going home they were full of little projects, and asked so many questions that they stopped at their own door before they were aware of it. A servant was immediately sent to hire a coach, which she was to order exactly at five o'clock in the morning. The children were then sent to bed, and were desired by their parents, when they kissed them and

* He was Herr Heilberg in German.

bade them good night, to remember and rise early to dress themselves in time, that they might not have to wait for them.

Mary was up before four; she roused the whole house, and ran from room to room, singing and dancing; and when she saw her mother ready to go downstairs, she returned to her own room to look for her bonnet. Suddenly she dropped her song, and remained silent near her closet door, on the floor of which her bonnet lay: she had tossed it carelessly there when she returned from paying a visit with her mother. Her brother saw her eyes full of tears, and enquired what was the matter that she would not come and play with him.

'Let me alone,' said she; 'I do not know what I shall do.' He ran half crying to his mother to know the cause: 'What have you done to Mary?' said he, in a sorrowful tone. 'We were laughing and playing together just now, and indeed I have not vexed her, yet she turns her back on me, and will not speak to me.'

The maid brought in the breakfast whilst they were speaking. 'Go and call your sister,' answered the mother, 'and I shall soon hear what is the matter with her.' He went, but quickly returned, saying his sister could not eat any breakfast this morning. 'Not eat any breakfast!' repeated the tender mother; 'go again, and desire her to come to me directly.'

Mary came trembling, her eyes were red with weeping; she hung down her head, and held in her hand, behind her, the muslin bonnet* her mother had made her when she went last time to see her cousins. It was covered with dirt, and unfit to wear. 'How has this happened?' asked Mrs. Jones. 'Pray, my dear mother, forgive me,' sobbed out the weeping girl, 'and indeed I will never in my life again neglect to do as you bid me, and put my bonnet in the box.' The father entered, and saw her in tears; and his wife, whom he had left a moment before, very cheerful, now looked grave and displeased. She pointed to the dirty, rumpled bonnet, and Mary caught her father's hand, repeating her lamentations; 'Poor girl,' said he, 'you have deprived yourself of the

* A travelling dress with a red ribbon, which was stained with beer.

pleasure we wished to procure you.' 'Dear father, dear mother,' cried Mary, turning from one to the other, 'surely, you will not leave me at home! Oh! you will not leave me?' 'My child,' answered her mother, 'do you not recollect that you have not another bonnet fit to go in; and that this is the second time that you have neglected to put it by in the box I gave you, to keep it clean till you wanted to wear it again? I cannot help you. I must leave you at home, because I should be ashamed to let you appear in company such a dirty figure. I shall not enjoy half the pleasure I expected, now I am obliged to leave you at home; but remember, that the disappointment entirely arises from your own thoughtlessness, and your not paying proper attention to my example, who always keep my clothes in order.'

Mary would have said more, but they saw the coach drive up to the door, and finished their breakfast in a hurry, not to keep the horses waiting. Mr. Jones took hold of Charles's hand, and after desiring Mary to remember to be more careful for the future, they drove off, leaving her weeping on the steps. Her longing eyes followed the carriage till it turned the corner of the street, then she sneaked sobbing to her own room, undressed herself, and wept most piteously. 'What a hateful thing is slovenliness,' said she; 'it has deprived me of all my promised pleasure. The other day, when my little cousins came to our house, I was ashamed to go into the parlour, because I had thrown ink on my frock, after my mother desired me to be careful. Another day, an old gentleman came into the room when they were playing with me; he kissed them all, and gave them some fruit—yes, all of them; yet he left me standing as if he did not see me. My mother told me afterwards that he was disgusted with me because my face was dirty, and my hair tangled. Now I am left at home, and I have vexed my father and mother; I know that they love me, and wished to take me with them when they went in a coach such a pleasant journey. How the sun shines, and here I am alone, crying, instead of going with them to see a fine house and garden—foolish girl that I am.'

She sat silent some time, then dried her eyes, and began

to fold up her clothes, and put her drawers and closet in order; and she gave the housemaid a shilling she had saved, to wash the bonnet, over which she had wept plentifully. This employment amused her a little while, but she began to lament again when she had no more to do. 'My shilling is thrown away,' thought she, 'as much as if I had tossed it out of the window. Had I been more careful, I might have bought a new book full of stories; or have given it to the poor girl my mother sent my old shoes to, whom I yesterday saw trembling with cold; it is all my own fault. Oh! this slovenliness is a nasty thing.'

Meanwhile the coach drove quickly over hill and dale.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT eleven o'clock they reached Sir William's mansion house. A servant received them, and made an apology for his master, who was still in bed. He informed them that he had caught cold by being out so late the evening before in the air, and had taken something warm when he went to rest, to carry it off by perspiration. He then offered to show them the way to the breakfast parlour; but Mr. Jones, who saw the garden through the hall look very inviting, proposed a walk, and his wife and son readily consented.

It was a beautiful garden, or rather pleasure ground; and every sweet path offered something new to their view, whilst they breathed the air perfumed by violets, pinks, roses, and various other flowers. They came to a lawn which surpassed all, and commanded a fine extensive view of the country; a little stream, artfully conducted from a neighbouring river, bubbled through it, and rustic seats made of roots and plaited osiers were placed under shady trees. They stopped to feast their eyes with the smiling prospect, and sat down on one of the inviting seats. For some time they remained quite silent, till, pressing each other's hands, they exclaimed, 'Well, this is beautiful! This is charming!' After they had gazed some time, Mr. Jones observed that man was a noble creature; that he made all nature bend to his power, and by his industry turned a barren waste into a

fruitful garden, planting therein a number of wholesome vegetables and sweet flowers, collected from different parts of the world ; forcing the wild trees to produce delicious apples and pears, and making the water run over dry ground.

While he was speaking, they heard a little noise behind the hedge. Charles started up to look from whence it came, and saw a poor labourer eating his dinner; a crust of brown bread and a morsel of cheese, this was his whole meal, and he washed it down with a draught of pure water from the brook. 'Look,' said Charles, 'there sits a very poor man, who has nothing to eat but bread and cheese, and only water to drink; poor man, I pity him!' 'And yet he may, perhaps, be a contented man,' answered his father. 'Come, we will try to make an acquaintance with him, and hear what he has to say of his own situation.' They turned down another walk, and found the man under a spreading tree. In his countenance they saw, when they approached nearer, an expression of honesty, and contentment smiled in every rough feature.

'God give a blessing to your meal,' said Mr. Jones. 'Thank you, master,' replied the countryman. 'And do you contrive to live contented, my good man?' asked Mr. Jones; 'for this little boy thinks you must be very unhappy with such a scanty meal.' 'The world goes very well with me, master,' replied he; 'I wish it went as well with everybody as with me. I am well, thank God! and health is dearer to me than a whole sack-full of gold. As long as I have health, I can work hard and laugh at the foolish fancies rich people vex themselves about. After I have dug from five in the morning almost till noon, bless my heart! how good I find my meal; with what an appetite I eat my bread and cheese. Believe me, my noble master, though he be lord of the manor, finds not his dainties half as good; and, when I go to bed, my sleep is so sound, I do not want a soft bed I assure you; nay, I could sleep on the ground if it was to come to that. I have worked in this garden ten years, and maintained my wife and children by the sweat of my own brow; have had a decent coat to go to church in, and a bit of meat of a Sunday, if times were not very hard;

and no one ever heard John complain, I will be bold to say. But, thank God ! I have never been sick ; sickness throws a man sadly back in the world, and sends many a poor child to a workhouse.' John was going on, but a servant came to tell them that Sir William was up and waited for them, and they were obliged to wish John a good morning.

They hastened to the house. What a grand house ! The hall was supported by pillars of fine marble, with beautiful statues in the niches, and a number of servants were busy preparing a splendid repast. They ascended a noble flight of stairs, and were conducted through some large rooms, elegantly furnished and hung with pictures and glasses richly gilt. At last they were ushered into the drawing room, and saw Sir William reclining on a sofa, leaning his head on his hand ; his face was pale, and his languid eyes, sunk in their red sockets, were scarcely opened. When they entered, he rose with some difficulty to receive them. 'Excuse my staying in bed,' said he, 'for I have had a wretched night ; towards the morning I slumbered an hour or so, but I am not at all the better for it. My head, my head is very heavy ; my stomach turns at the very sight of food ; I have an oppression at my breast, a stitch in my side. Oh ! oh !' Mr. Jones expressed his compassion, and he went on for an hour giving them a history of his various complaints. He mentioned a number of physicians to whom he had applied, described the disagreeable operations he had undergone, and the nauseous medicines he had taken. Before he had finished the dismal recital more company entered, who congratulated him on account of its being his birthday ; but he could only complain of his indisposition, which rendered life a burthen, and would not allow him one day to rejoice with his visitors. His lowness of spirits spread a gloom over the conversation, till they were relieved by a servant who came to tell them that dinner was served up, and all the company gladly repaired to the dining parlour.

They passed through a range of servants who stood in the hall dressed in rich liveries, and, on entering the room, it was a superb sight to see the table covered with silver dishes, and plate and glass glittering on noble sideboards.

They were soon seated, and one course succeeded another, consisting of the greatest dainties the season afforded, dressed in such various ways that it would require the knowledge of a French cook to describe them: sweetmeats, fruit, and many different sorts of wine followed; a fine band of music struck up, and played the most lively airs; and the company seemed to enjoy the feast; all but Sir William. He was helped to many things, which he sent away after he had laboured to eat a bit or two, to show his respect for the company.

When they returned to the drawing-room to drink coffee, Mr. Jones and his son stood with Sir William at a bow-window to view the grand prospect it commanded. A fine track of ground extended itself on every side, but it was only a part of Sir William's great estate. 'I am glad to see you so happy,' said Mr. Jones, addressing his friend; 'you have all that the heart of man could wish for, your garden, your house, your table and servants are princely.' 'Happy!' exclaimed Sir William, 'me! wretched man! I believe there crawls not under the sun a more miserable creature than I am. Of what use are all these things you have enumerated when I have not health. Did you not remark that I scarcely tasted the various dishes, and all my costly furniture is lost on me. I am so continually in pain, when I lie down, I turn from side to side, unable to sleep; or should I slumber, frightful dreams, the consequence of a slow fever, fatigue me as much as watchfulness. You tell me my garden is pleasant; I seldom walk in it, lest I should catch cold; and my children were all so weak, they died in their infancy. I have none to nurse me, and sickness makes all my acquaintance fly from me. It is true, many of my relations visit me; but I think they only come to calculate how long I shall thus gradually be sinking into the grave. Believe me, my dear friend, I often wish to be in the place of one of my day labourers, to be able to eat, drink, sleep, and laugh; and to have children to take care of me in my old age. I see them dancing round the sturdy ploughman, while I, wretched man, am a burden to myself. He raised his eyes towards Heaven, and a tear stole down his pale cheeks.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER dinner Charles went to play in the garden, and was so delighted with the variety of new objects which caught his eye wherever he glanced, that he thought he could never see enough. At last he observed through the garden gate that there was still much more to be seen. The river ran through the meadows, and willows grew on its banks. He followed its winding course, till a wood diverted his attention. Now, thought he, I must see where that pretty path leads. He ran to it and trembled with pleasure when he entered the cool shade; but he had scarcely advanced twenty steps before he lost sight of the meadows. Thick bushes surrounded him, above which oaks and beeches elevated themselves majestically, on whose summit he only saw a little blue sky. All was still as in an uninhabited island, unless the croaking of a raven or the cooing of a wood-pigeon resounded through the trees. This gloom, this solitude, the profound silence, and the hoarse croaking which sometimes interrupted it, made Charles feel an indistinct sensation of fear. He advanced cautiously, and looked round with timidity at every step. Sometimes it came into his head to turn back, but still he loitered, attracted by the sight of many wild flowers he had never seen before, and other pretty things.

One moment he pursued a butterfly, then stopped to gather blackberries, and here and there he found some wood strawberries; sometimes he gathered them for his mother, then for himself. In short, when he had his pockets and hands full of blackberries and flowers, he resolved to turn back and seek for the garden gate. He turned, quickened his pace, and walked a long time looking forward, expecting every moment to see the end of the wood; but he looked in vain; he walked till he was tired, yet no meadows could he see. Then it came into his head that he had lost himself, and was wandering still further out of his way. At this thought he felt a cold shivering run over his body, and he could hardly draw his breath, his heart was so full. 'What

will become of me,' thought he, 'if I am obliged to remain in the wood with nothing to eat or drink ! Must I—oh ! must I lie in the dark ; perhaps a serpent, or some bad man, may come and kill me while I slumber. I have heard my mother talk of gipsies, who strip little children and leave them naked or carry them away, and they never see their dear parents any more. O my mother, dear mother, shall I never see you again ?' He was so disturbed by these sad apprehensions, that he knew not what to do, or which way to turn. But he might easily have found his way out if he had had sense enough to remark the position of the sun, and directed his steps accordingly ; or if he had pursued a beaten path, it would have led him to a village, or at least to a farmhouse ; but fear made him incapable of reflection. He never thought of looking at the sun, and after pursuing one path a little while, he turned without any reason into another, which for a moment he believed to be the right one. Once he was indeed in the right path, because he found a branch of blackberries which he had left there, intending to take them home with him when he turned back. Had he been a man he would probably have continued in this road, but the reason of a little child is as weak as its body. He could not reason justly on account of his youth, and wanted his father's advice to teach him how to think, as much as his strong arm to support a poor tired boy whose legs tottered under him.

More and more confused, he scrambled through thorns and briars at the glimpse of a new path. In this state of anxiety the night came on. It grew darker and darker, and as the day shut in he began to weep aloud. However, the moon soon was up ; it was at the full, and enlightened the whole wood ; but it only increased poor lost Charles's terror. While it was dark the wood appeared all black, and he could not distinguish any particular thing to be afraid of ; but the confined light of the moon gave to the objects which surrounded him the most fantastic figures. At a little distance he imagined that he saw a little black man sitting waving his head backwards and forwards ; that then a great white thing came out of a bush ; nay, that a death's head peeped

through on an oak, and, not far from it, something with horns and a long tail. In fact there was none of these things; he only saw bushes, broken branches, and a white horse; yet fear rendered his mind so weak that he could not consider tranquilly how foolish his conjectures were, nor had he sufficient courage to approach to see the objects distinctly.

At last he recollected his father's advice, and fell on his knees and prayed to God to have pity on him. 'Oh, my father, who art in heaven,' he sobbed out, 'forsake not a poor lost child!' Tears almost choked him, but he was soon roused by a rustling among the bushes, and now indeed he really saw a tall black figure approach him, with a white cap on his head, and a milk white pigeon flew before it. He started up, but was so weak his legs sunk under him, and he fell again on the ground; however, as he plainly saw it advance nearer and nearer, fear gave him strength, and screaming out he sprang forward. The thing followed him, crying 'Stop, stop!' but he ran heedlessly on, and running against the root of a tree he fell and was caught. The terror which seized him is not to be described; he neither heard nor saw anything, and his tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth when he attempted to utter a few inarticulate words.

Notwithstanding all this terror, this black man was not such a wicked thing as Charles supposed; his hand, far from being as cold as ice, was warm, and pressed him gently. 'Poor child,' said he, 'what aileth thee? How camest thou here?' and 'Why art thou afraid of me?'

The black man was obliged to repeat these questions several times before Charles had power to answer him. At last, gathering a little courage, he asked with a trembling voice, 'Who are you?' 'I am,' replied the black man, 'neither a spirit nor a thief; but the curate of a village not far off.' Now the half dead Charles began to breathe again, and observing the figure his imagination had made so hideous, he saw in reality a clergyman with a white wig.

The joy he felt may easily be conceived. He now hoped to find his way out of the wood, conducted by this friendly man; but recollecting himself he asked, 'Where is the white pigeon which flew before you?' 'A white pigeon,' answered he; 'I did not see one. Where should it come from so late?

Fear has undoubtedly clouded your sight.' While he was speaking Charles saw him rub a white handkerchief across his forehead, for he had been walking fast to hasten home, and had taken off his hat to wipe his temples when Charles took his wig for a huge cap. Now he was more tranquil he could reflect, and sensibly concluded that fear had transformed that very white handkerchief into a pigeon.

Glad to hear the sound of his own voice, and to hold a man's hand, he began to relate how he came into the wood, lost himself, and what terrible things he had seen, adding, 'When I saw you coming I thought—I know not what I thought, I was so terrified. 'And did you not tell your parents,' asked the clergyman, 'that you were going to walk in the wood?' 'No,' replied Charles. The clergyman drew back a step or two astonished and let fall his hand, saying 'Thy father know nothing of it! What an imprudent child thou art! Such a young boy, who can have learned so little, should never have ventured out of the house without leave. God put it into the hearts of men to keep their children longer at home with them than dogs keep their puppies, or hens their chickens, because a child is still more helpless, has more to learn, and could not so readily find its own food, or act properly, if not directed by a man who had lived a long time in the world. As you grow taller, if you are a good boy, you will grow wiser, and learn from the example of your parents, and other men, how to take care of yourself. But now your parents know that you are so ignorant and helpless they will be very uneasy.' Charles had forgotten everything when he was terrified almost out of his wits, but he began to weep again as soon as he thought of his father and mother. 'Be composed,' said Mr. Benson,* for that was the name of the clergyman; 'I will send a message to them as soon as I reach home.' Charles again recovered his vivacity, and, encouraged by the kind treatment he had met with, ventured to ask more questions.

Charles. Dear sir, what were all the things I saw in the wood?—the little man in black, the death's head, the horns?

Curate. I will explain all to you. Did you not perceive

* Magister Helwig.

that, as soon as you imagined you had lost yourself, you thought of all the accidents which could happen to a child in such a situation ; you trembled and could scarcely breathe ; was it not so ?

Charles. Yes, just so.

Curate. What you felt was fear. Fear is a sad thing ; it makes people so foolish. They can neither see clearly nor hear distinctly when it becomes violent ; and it seems as if all the accidents they thought of were just at hand. They soon really have cause to be sorrowful, for, thinking they have not strength to avoid the threatening danger, they make no effort, or run directly into the evil they should shun.

‘ This happened to a man who now lives in my parish, who was a soldier in America last war.* He was an idle boy, and never learned to think or do anything in a regular manner. Very late in the evening of a winter’s day, his captain had occasion to send him in a hurry with some orders to a detached troop, and he was obliged to cross the skirts of one of the vast wastes in America. He had often heard that the natives lurked in thickets, and rode trembling along, expecting to see them rush out of every bush. At last he actually thought he saw a body of the copper coloured men, who inhabit those trackless woods, coming towards him with menacing gestures, loud shouts, and horrid yells, as he had heard described. Though all was still save the rustling of the leaves, which a strong wind whistled through, he imagined that they were close at his heels, and, spurring his horse, it set off full speed till he let fall the reins ; endeavouring to catch them again he fell over the horse’s head, and broke his leg by the fall. On the ground he remained a long time groaning, till his groans reached the ears of one of those men whom we Europeans with white complexions call savages. His heart, however, was humane ; the same blood warmed it which mounts to beautify a fair face. He held the soldier’s head against his bosom till he recovered his senses, then took him on his shoulders and

* This is altogether altered : the soldier was a hussar, who took a row of trees for the enemy, rode away from them, lost his way, and actually was wounded and taken prisoner.

carried him to his cabin, for the terrified man had actually approached one. He soon gathered some sticks together, lighted a fire, and brought him all the refreshment the cabin afforded ; afterwards he made him a bed, covering a mat with the skins of all the wild animals he had killed. Nor was this all ; he ran fearlessly to the same common to seek for some salutary herbs, which he applied to his wound and bound up his leg. Every day did he hunt for food, and dress it for his enemy, and when he could limp along carried him within sight of the camp, and pressing his sick brother's hand against his forehead, he prayed the Great Spirit to take care of him, and conduct him safe to his own country.'

It was the same in your case ; you thought so long of the accidents you had heard of, that you created them. Believe me, the little black man, the death's head, and the rest of the things you have mentioned, were only branches of trees, which your heated imagination, like the soldier's, gave forms to, though in fact no such things were near. If you had not been terrified, and had always followed the same beaten path, you would certainly have found your way out of the wood, for it is not very extensive. But fear made you wander foolishly from one path to another, without considering what you ought to have done immediately upon discovering that you had lost your way. If I had not met you, some unlucky accident might, through this unreasonable fear, have befallen you. Charles now held the clergyman's hand still faster ; and when you saw me, continued he, how did you feel?

Charles. I can scarcely tell you ; I trembled in every limb ; tried to scream out for help, but my tongue would not move ; and, when I attempted to run, my legs bent under me.

Curate. What you felt was fear, which is very useful to make men careful when directed by reason, but very hurtful to weak men and children who have not sufficient strength of mind to moderate it, and keep it within due bounds. I have heard of men who have suddenly dropped down dead with terror, or been seized with dreadful fits ;

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and sometimes it renders them so foolish that they lose all their senses for a moment, and fly into the very evil they wished to avoid.

My own experience taught me this. When I was at the university, the house in which I lived took fire. You may suppose that we were all terrified to see the flames bursting out at midnight, but my presence of mind soon returned; I hastened to pack up my books and clothes, and carried them to a place of safety, and returned to assist the rest of the family. But the student who lodged in the next chamber to me was so disturbed by fear that he knew not what to do; lost time in inquiring how the fire began, and complaining of the carelessness of the servants: in short, he brought nothing out of his chamber but an old draught board, and, if I had not exerted myself, all his books would have been lost as well as his clothes, which I had not time to carry away. If then, my child, you wish to live contented, and have such a degree of presence of mind as will enable you to be useful to your fellow-creatures, guard against vain fears.

Charles. But how am I to do it? Now the terror is over I wonder at my fear; it is quite gone.

Curate. It is not possible to guard against all fear, or entirely banish the sudden sensations which in a certain degree are useful, or God would not have planted them in our mind; but try to moderate them by reflection, that they may not disturb your reason and senses, and only fear the danger you really see, and not those your imagination creates. You will soon succeed if you think often that many things have not happened as you feared they would, and that those you could not avoid were not half so dreadful as you had represented to yourself in the first moment of fear. You should try to think of the best method to avoid real danger, instead of giving way to fear, which creates imaginary difficulties. If you are good, and learn to think as you grow up, your mind will grow strong, and you will acquire true courage, which in the hour of danger keeps the head clear, and enables the mind to see the proper step which it should resolutely take, undisturbed by unnecessary

terror. When you can trust in God however, as you now trust in me, you will have nothing to fear. A child looks up to a man for protection, a man to God.

CHAPTER IV.

YES, there he is, my dearest husband; there comes our father, our dear father, cried a little group who met the curate. They were his wife and children, who had expected him above an hour, and growing a little uneasy came out to meet him. His wife kissed his cheek, and two of the children caught his hand, while the little one, who could not speak plain, embraced his knees.

They quickly enquired who that little boy was whom he had brought home in his hand? He informed them in a few words, that he was a child who had rambled into the wood unknown to his parents, and lost himself. At the same time he requested his wife to walk home before them and call on one of his poor parishioners, who would, for a mug of cyder, go to relieve Charles's parents from their anxiety, by assuring them that he was safe; he added, that he would follow her slowly with the children, because the poor stray child was so fatigued he could not walk fast. The tender mother, feeling for the afflicted parents, hastened to the village, and sent a peasant immediately with a message to them. The clergyman followed with his three children, who tripped along before him, while he slackened his pace to converse with Charles, who could hardly drag one foot after the other.

Curate. Were you pleased, my dear, to see my children run with so much joy to meet and kiss me?

Charles. O yes! If my father was now to meet us I should do so too; I should be so glad.

Curate. You would be glad, and why?

Charles. Why, sir, I do not understand you. He is very good to me, and loves me dearly; how can I help being glad when I see him again?

Curate. Do you know then what joy is? We feel it when something agreeable suddenly occurs. My wife and

children rejoiced to see me again, because they love me, and know that I have their good at heart, and you would on the same account rejoice to see your parents.

But believe me, my dear child, that even joy, when it is too strong, does as much harm as violent fear. It disturbs the operations of the understanding to such a degree, that a man is no longer directed by reason, and in this confusion often hurts himself. I have a sister who fainted when she heard that she had gained a great prize in the lottery; and a peasant in my parish, whose son came home suddenly from sea, after he had given him up for lost above five years, felt such lively joy, that he ran like a madman downstairs, and missing a step, fell and snapped his ankle. Guard then against immoderate joy.

Charles. How am I to guard against it?

Curate. You must often think that the unexpected good is never as great as we at first imagine, and that there is always something disagreeable attached to it.

My sister, for instance, her prize caused her much vexation. As soon as it was known that she had been so fortunate, all her relations flocked round. Some borrowed money, and others received handsome presents from her; yet few of them were satisfied. They teased her almost to death with importunities, and did not scruple to call her unfeeling and covetous. If she had foreseen all this care, or only considered a moment that riches never purchased content, she would not have fainted through excess of joy. And as for the peasant's son who returned so unexpectedly from sea, he had been from ship to ship, and became a thief, so that after he came back he would neither work nor obey his father. If the unfortunate parent had thought of this, and represented to himself that perhaps the son who had so long neglected to write to his old father might not be an honest man, he would not have been so intoxicated with joy, nor have stepped so heedlessly.

They now approached the Curate's house, and the dog sprang out to meet them, testifying his joy by a number of tricks and marks of fondness, till they all entered through the garden into the house.

CHAPTER V.

HENRIETTA, the Curate's wife, received her dear guests very affectionately, and after informing them that she had sent the message to Charles's parents, she conducted them into the room in which she had spread a table for supper.

It was a very frugal repast. There was neither meat nor pastry to be seen; a plate of cherries and some bread and cheese made the whole of the meal. But the healthy, friendly countenances which surrounded the table made it appear much more pleasant than Sir William's sumptuous feast.

'Come, children, let us eat and be merry,' said the good clergyman; 'we are in health, are hungry, and here is sufficient to satisfy us;' and, turning to Charles, he added, 'you are with good friendly people, and what more is necessary to make us all happy?'

Charles seated himself, and eat with a good appetite, and he grew still more lively when Mr. Benson began a conversation which was entirely new to him. 'How,' asked he, 'children, have you nothing to relate?' Henrietta soon related that she had read of a queen who, when a princess visited her, and begged to see her jewels and other precious things, sent for her children and said, 'Behold my treasure: these are dearer to me than all the gold or jewels in the world.' George,* the eldest son, told the little history of a man who had been shipwrecked, and hearing all the crew lament the loss of their goods, said tranquilly, 'I have everything with me.' Henry, the youngest son, said that he had read of a nobleman who would not give his daughter to a gentleman who had demanded her in marriage before he had learned a mechanical trade. The little Caroline stammered something out about a young mouse who had not obeyed its mother, and went, contrary to her advice, to play with a cat, who caught her and bit her to death. And the Curate entertained the company with the history of a Post, which in the beginning was very dreadful to hear, but in the end excited a universal laugh, because it soon appeared that it was

* The names are much altered. They are Ernst and Fritz in the German.

only the trick of some giddy young people, who wished to amuse themselves by terrifying others.

It was a custom at the Curate's, that whoever supped with them should repeat something to amuse the company; and now came Charles's turn. They pressed him, according to custom, to tell them a story; but as he could not recollect one, he simply related how he had wandered out of the garden and lost himself. As he was obliged, during the relation, to speak sometimes of his father and mother, they soon perceived that, after uttering their names, he became more sad, and before he concluded tears rushed into his eyes, and he asked permission to leave the room for a moment. He was allowed to retire, and not returning soon, the Curate sought all over the house and in the yard for him, but no Charles could he find. At last he discovered him behind the kitchen door, weeping bitterly.

Curate. What is the matter with my little guest?

Charles. Nothing at all.

Curate. Something must ail you, or you would not cry.

Charles. Ah! if I were with my dear father and mother!

Curate. You now feel, my dear child, languor, or a violent and uneasy desire to see some absent person, whom you love. I do not blame you for it; no one ought to be so dear to a good child as his parents, and he should feel a little uneasy when he is parted from them. But, my dear child, if you would live contented, you must learn to moderate this as well as fear and joy, or you will miss many pleasures. Do you think you can bring them here by your longing and crying? Certainly not; you know it is impossible. Of what use is, then, this violent desire, which makes you so very uncomfortable? Come, we are just ready to begin to play in the parlour, where you will find something to amuse you and make you laugh; but if you will still obstinately indulge your useless longing, you will lose, at least, one pleasant hour of your life. Come with me and be cheerful; your father and mother are well; before this time they know that you are with those who will take care of you; therefore they are no longer uneasy on your account. To-morrow I will take you to them, then you may kiss and talk to them as much as you please.

Charles. No, no, leave me alone ; let me cry here; I cannot play.

Curate. Well, if you will cry, I cannot help you.

He returned to the parlour, and they all came round him, asking eagerly, 'Where is he? What is the matter with poor Charles?'

Curate. Behind the kitchen door, sighing and crying after his father and mother.

'Poor boy,' they all said, in the same breath, 'let us try to do something for him.' They ran out, and taking him by the hand, they prayed him not to cry; but he cried still more. They drew him into the parlour, but he turned his face to the wall and continued to sob.

'Begin to play, children,' said the Curate, 'the evening is passing away;' but they did not hear him, they were so anxious to persuade the little stranger to leave off crying. 'So it happens,' continued he, 'when we long for anything out of our reach, we not only deprive ourselves of much pleasure, but by continuing to weep and lament we disturb the social comfort of our friends. I have looked forward during the whole day to the pleasure I should enjoy this evening; my wife and children have eagerly expected my return, and this little boy destroys all. Come, my dear, take the children to bed, and I will go to my chamber.' He rose, and they all prepared to follow him, with disheartened faces.

Charles now began to reflect that it was very ungrateful and unbecoming to disturb the pleasure of those good people who had taken so much pains to amuse him. 'Dear sir,' said he, 'do not go to bed; I will not cry any more; I will play—only stay a moment.' Now all was joy again, and little Caroline kissed him, saying, 'He will be a good boy.' They brought their stools back, and seated themselves round the table.

'Now, my dear,' said the curate to his wife, 'which of the children has behaved best to-day?' Henry smiled. 'Do you not see,' answered she, 'in the smile of the little blue-eyed boy, that he has been the most industrious, attentive child to-day.' The Curate took him by the hand, and said, while he kissed him and pinched his cheek, 'Are you not

contented since you have this evening received such praise ? Do always your duty, my child, and you will ever feel this soft satisfaction. However, I am going to procure you another pleasure ; you shall choose the game you love best, and we will all play at it.'

'The play of the merchant,' said Henry.

'Good children,' said the Curate, 'this evening let us play the pleasant play of the merchant. I am the merchant; I have to sell all sorts of eatables, beautiful clothes, books, and natural curiosities,—in short, all that you wish for at a just price.' Every one now asked for something. Then the Curate enquired where they were made ?—of what material ?—who made them ?—the use they were of ?—and how much they commonly cost ?—and whoever could not answer these questions, or answered wrong, must pay a forfeit. George, for instance, asked for a hat ; and he was questioned, who made it ?—of what it was made ?—if there was more than one sort of hats ?—and of what use they are to men, &c. ?

This ever furnished something to laugh at, and particularly when they drew out the forfeits. Now all were redeemed. 'Once more, only once more let us play,' they all cried out. The Curate shook his head : 'I thought you would be more moderate in your pleasures, and go to bed.' But the children begged and kissed his hands and cheeks so long that the father at last said, 'Well, play once more, but you will soon see what will happen.'

They then began to play again, but not in such a spirited manner as at first ; all were soon weary. George began to yawn, Henry to rub his eyes ; Charles was almost nodding with sleep, and the little Caroline began to cry and complain, 'To bed, mamma ; will you go to bed ?' and George himself asked if they might soon leave off playing ? 'So it happens,' said the Curate, 'when we know not how to be moderate in our pleasures, vexation or disgust always follows. If you had left off playing in time, you would have gone to bed contented ; but you are now dissatisfied.'

Thus ended the play, and all the children went to bed, Caroline half crying with sleep, and the rest with an expression of extreme weariness on their countenances.

CHAPTER VI.

EARLY in the morning every one was in motion in the Curate's house, and so full of spirits that Charles could not remain in bed, though he wished to have slept an hour or two longer, because he still felt weary after his long walk. He was a child accustomed to neatness and order; he washed his face, cleaned his teeth, and combed his hair. He came downstairs, and found them all dressed in the most decent manner, ready to join in a short prayer, which the Curate addressed to their heavenly Father, thanking Him for the protection He had afforded them while they slept, and entreating Him to grant them food the ensuing day, and sense to do their duty.* They then all ran on the grass before the door till breakfast was ready, and returned with an appetite to eat their bread and milk.

George left some milk in his basin, and broke part of his bread into it, when Charles enquired what he was going to do with it. He said, 'I am going to carry it to my dog Pompey; the poor fellow has not had any breakfast yet.'

Then he took the milk to his little playful puppy; but they soon heard him cry bitterly, and all the family ran out to see what was the matter with him. There stood poor George, dissolved in tears. They asked him what had happened? 'Oh,' answered he, 'my dog, my little dog, my good dog! Pompey† is dead.' They surrounded him and joined in the lamentations. There lay the poor dog George had been so fond of, that he always divided his meals with him; and no one could guess how he had been so suddenly deprived of life.

The Curate spoke tenderly to him, and said, 'I pity you, my dear George, for I know you were very fond of your little dog; but leave off crying, and I will take care to procure you another next week.' All this signified nothing. George continued to weep: 'Oh! my dog, my poor Pompey!'

* They had a morning song first.

† Ramboldchen.

'The boy,' said the Curate, 'is very sorrowful. That which we feel when anything disagreeable happens, we call sorrow. But it is misery when men carry it so far that they like to indulge it. Sorrow does no good, and if George should cry for a whole year, "My good dog ! my Pompey !" it will not bring him back. Nay, immoderate sorrow will make him neglect his duty, and then he cannot expect much pleasure in the evening. Come, children, let us go into the garden to our business.'

'Sir,' said Charles, with a sorrowful tone, 'will you not soon take me back to my father and mother.'

'Yes,' answered the Curate; 'only it is necessary that I work a little in the garden first, and tell the children what they ought to do, and visit my sick parishioners. For whoever would live content—mind this, Charles—must dispatch his business in an orderly manner. We never feel satisfied with ourselves when we always think of something we should do, and have left undone.'

Charles followed him a little sad, but when he came into the garden his countenance soon began to clear up. It was a charming garden. There were not firs, yews, or aloes to be seen, it is true, nor the statues and fountains which ornament the gardens of the rich; but all was simple and useful, yet sweetly pleasant. The walls were hung with peaches and nectarines, and fine cherry, apple, and pear trees were planted in such a manner as not to screen the vegetables which grew in great profusion: peas, beans, and various other useful plants were placed in beds to catch the sunbeams, and currants and gooseberries grew near the walks.

One part of the garden was peculiarly allotted to flowers. The beehives were placed there, and a seat shaded with trees, around whose trunks woodbines and jasmines twined, afforded a cool retreat at noon, and here they retired to when it was too hot to work in the garden. Roses bloomed on all sides, and a number of flowers sprung up in succession to perfume the air, and afford the Curate an opportunity to remark the wisdom and goodness of God displayed in the most minute wild flower, as well as in the nobler productions of nature, animals, and men.

Beyond the garden was a meadow. They entered through a little gate, and saw two cows feeding, a calf bounding near them, and some poultry, seeking for their own food, gave a still more cheerful appearance to the whole. The hen chuckled to gather her chickens, and birds sung in the hedge which enclosed the meadow: all was gay, and seemed to laugh with joy. Charles laughed too, and catching the Curate's hand, he said, 'What a beautiful place! if my father and mother were here, I should never wish to leave it while I lived.'

Then the Curate gave each of the children their task; but George was so sorrowful on account of the death of his dog, that Henry offered to pluck all the kidney beans for his mother, and the little Caroline had a bed to weed. George, when he had nothing to do, cried still more, and his father sent him into the house that he might not disturb their pleasure, since he would not try to amuse himself. After the Curate had looked over the garden, and plucked some ripe fruit for their supper, he returned to Charles, and led him to a seat raised on a little eminence which overlooked the whole garden.

'I am very glad,' said he, 'to see you so pleased; but this place was not always as beautiful as it is now. When I came here, about fourteen years ago, it was full of weeds, briars, and stones. I came to be the curate of the village, and married my wife, because I loved her with my whole heart; but she had no fortune, and my curacy was not sufficient to maintain us. This made me very uneasy, and some months passed away in a melancholy manner.

'While I was in this state, a rich old farmer came to visit me, and soon observed my sadness. "Friend," said he, "why are you so troubled?" "How can," answered I, "such a poor man as I am be contented?" "You poor," replied he; "you may reckon yourself worth above two thousand pounds." "You joke with me," said I; "if you will give me a hundred pounds you should have all I am worth in the world, and you would have a poor bargain." "Very well," returned he, drawing a knife out of his pocket and seizing my hand he made a stroke, as if he meant to cut it off.

Full of terror I snatched it away. "Give it to me, only give this little hand, and I will let you have for it two hundred pounds, and leave you your left hand and all your goods." You cannot think, dear Charles, how much I was terrified by this demand. I stepped back, and looked full in the farmer's face. "Do you perceive," said he, "Mr. Parson, how rich you are! Only that single limb you would not sell me for two hundred pounds. If I had attempted to cut off your head, you could not have been more eager to prevent me. Without joking, Mr. Parson, a young man in health, with a sound mind and robust body, ought not to complain of poverty. See there, the hen, she finds everywhere food for herself and chickens, and so do those pigeons. It is the same with all animals; the raven, the owl, the fox, and even flies: they all have sufficient industry to procure themselves food, and why not man? Hold up your head, and instead of anxiety and lamentations, think how you can better your situation; think of using your arms, and all will go well. God preserve you, Mr. Parson! next week I shall come again to see you." And so he left me deep in thought.

'Sorrowfully I lifted up my eyes from the ground, and discovered a spider who had just caught a great fly in her web, and the whole web was full of the remains of dead flies. The spider, thought I, lives without care, she procures her daily bread—and thou, then I sprung angrily up, thou a man, exclaimed I, who can reflect, read, and write; who has a vigorous arm and ingenious hands, with which so many useful things have been made, and thou canst not procure thy own subsistence!

'From this moment I turned all my thoughts to the main subject, to find some work which might maintain me. I passed the whole night without sleeping a wink, and sleepless nights are particularly favourable to reflection. I could think of nothing else; it seemed to me as if my whole village was before me. My thoughts ran over every corner to search for something to do.

'Then this waste place presented itself to my mind, which you now see a cultivated garden. Some years before a

house had stood on it, but the thatch caught fire, and it was soon burnt to the ground, and the inhabitants left it in ruins, and went to live somewhere else. The moment I thought of it, I could think of nothing but clearing away the rubbish. Yes, thought I, I could earn sufficient to maintain my wife and the coming infant, if I had money enough to build a little house on this waste ground, which originally was stolen from the common. If the lord of the manor would give me leave, I should be a contented man.

'This lucky thought pleased me, and I counted the hours till the good farmer came again. At last he came, and his first question was, "Well, how are your spirits now? Have you thought of anything?" "Yes," replied I; "all would go well if I could obtain leave to build a little house on the common, and, if I could borrow some money to add to the little I have, I should soon be able to build a house and buy a cow; and before my little one came into the world I might reasonably hope to maintain it and its mother comfortably."

"Leave all these cares to me," said he, giving me his hand; "the place is yours; I will build the house for you, because I understand these matters better than you gentlemen, who have been poring over books half your lives, and you may pay me by degrees as you find it convenient."

'The grant was soon obtained, and while they were building the house I worked hard every day to clear the place of stones, and grubbed up the briars. I laid the stones on one another, and made a kind of wall, plastered with mud, to keep out the cattle, that they might not spoil my garden, and afterwards plaited twigs before it round which my fruit trees twine. The rubbish and cinders I burnt to ashes, and they made excellent manure for the ground.

The next year I brought my wife cabbages, peas, beans, and salad, besides many other things which already had grown in the garden, and I felt sincere pleasure when I could bring her something which I had cultivated myself. My parishioners brought me slips and suckers, which I planted with care, and you see what they are come to; nay, some of the young trees rose from the kernels which I put

into the ground after I had eat the fruit. In that spot I sowed seed hay and clover, and every year make hay enough to serve my cows when I take them off the common, and they not only supply us with what milk we want, but sufficient butter and cheese for the family. The flowers my wife got by degrees, and my good friend the farmer gave me a swarm of bees.

‘Thus passed two years, and my labour made me more healthy than ever; but, in spite of all this, I had my cares; I was in debt to some tradesmen who live in the next market town. One day when the farmer visited me, he expressed his satisfaction to see all look so comfortable, and that my labour had been so successful. “Now,” said he, “I hope you have enough to live on.” I threw my eyes down on the ground, and said “No; I am still thirty pounds in debt.”

‘Hearing this, he grew angry, and struck his oaken staff on the floor, and said, “Not enough to live on, how comes that about? You have only need of food, clothes, and some books! Your garden and poultry would almost supply you with sufficient food; and the money you receive from the curacy is surely enough to purchase clothes, books, and other necessities; let me see what you are in debt for?” He was a respectable old man, so I could not be angry with him, though he hurt me when he spoke so quick.

‘I took out the bills; he mumbled over them. “Silk for a gown, wine, coffee, soap, a glass, china cups, &c. I see how it is,” added he, “only the soap is a necessary, all these other superfluities you could have lived comfortably without; or, at least, have purchased some things at a cheaper rate, which would have answered your purpose full as well. Where is all this money to come from? Sir, if a man cannot pay for coffee, he must drink milk; and beer, instead of wine. Your wife should have been contented with a cotton gown, and china is quite unnecessary. A glass for your wife to put her cap straight by would be sufficient. I thought you had more sense than to wish for such a childish ornament in your parlour. Do you see that raven; he has picked up a snail, and is devouring it with pleasure. Every day he procures sufficient

to satisfy his appetite, and lives without care or debts, for nature produces all that he wants. But as soon as it should come into his head, that the snails, mice, and bones of his native country, and the wood he had seen grow, were all too mean for him ; and if this foolish pride led him to sell them, to purchase with the money the cinnamon, oysters, and mice of India, certainly nature would not afford him sufficient to satisfy his luxury ; and he must soon be plunged into a sea of cares and debts.

“ I do not like those people who hoard up their money, after they have supplied the pressing wants of nature, and do not allow themselves innocent pleasures ; but I likewise believe that men ought first to be careful to secure necessities, before they think of superfluities. The art of avoiding superfluous expenses, to be able to procure necessities, I call economy. Economy, economy, dear Mr. Parson, you have still to learn, or else all your industry will go for nothing ; care will still pursue you ; and do not take amiss what I am going to say,—you will only leave your poor children debts, and cheat the tradespeople. Good day, sir ; do not take offence at my well-meant reprimand.”

“ I must own this rough admonition hurt me a little ; but, when I coolly reflected, I could not help acknowledging that the good farmer was in the right. I considered within myself, if God, who had taken such care of the raven, had not been equally good to me ; and soon saw, though there were some things above my reach, that I was surrounded by every necessary of life as well as the raven.

“ My ground afforded flax, my sheep wool, and with the help of a maid, who milks the cows, and does the hardest work, my wife could spin sufficient of both to clothe the whole family. My dairy supplies us with milk, butter, and cheese ; my garden furnishes all kinds of vegetables ; and poultry and pigs serve to vary our meals ; instead of beer, we make cyder of the apples you see the trees are loaded with. Nay, I found I could spare some milk and vegetables to my poor parishioners after our own wants were supplied. And whatever was necessary besides, the income of the curacy enabled us to purchase. I then proposed to my

wife that we should first provide food and clothes, and not allow ourselves any superfluities till we had money to spare.

‘From that moment I dismissed my cares, and never forgot my dear bought experience. After I had paid my debts, I saved enough to render my house neat and convenient, and even to buy some furniture and books, besides improving my garden, and giving a little to the poor—and for all these I have to thank my labour and economy.’

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN the Curate had finished the last sentence, he rose and said, he was now obliged to visit a sick person who wanted his advice. “Do you wish to accompany me, Charles?” ‘Yes,’ answered he, ‘I should like to go.’

They then went out together, and soon came to a little thatched house. The Curate knocked with his stick against the door; a woman opened it, and the moment she saw him began to wring her hands, and cry ‘It is all over; it is all over; but come in.’

She opened the chamber door. Gracious God! what a dreadful sight! On the bed lay a man, whose mouth and nose were almost eat away by a cancer. On the foot of the bed sat four children, who, as soon as the Curate entered, burst into tears and cried, ‘Our poor father, see how he suffers.’ The Curate could not restrain his tears; he turned his face to the wall and wept, and Charles wept with him. When he had wiped away his tears, he came towards the sick man, and said in a softened voice, ‘How do you find yourself, my poor friend?’

‘As well as can be expected,’ replied he; ‘I take care as much as possible not to be fretful; I am patient; and, by the help of patience, one may endure the greatest pain. If I were impatient and threw myself from one side of the bed to the other, and quarrelled peevishly with my family, I should soon be quite lost. My pain would become more violent, my blood heated by impatience, and restless anxiety would

increase the fury of my disorder, and my wife and children, who have without this sufficient trouble, would no longer tenderly watch over me. But resignation moderates every plan; and my wife, children, and neighbours pity, nurse, and hearten me up.—Patience can soften every pain.’

‘You are right, my good friend,’ answered the Curate; when we suffer we cannot do better than moderate our impatience and conceal our anguish. Is it the fault of the innocent people who surround us, that we are afflicted? Why then should we make them suffer for it? or by our ill-humour drive them away, whom duty does not compel to take care of us. How much more grateful it is to be nursed rather from a motive of affection, than mere duty. Poor man! you know not how sincerely I pity you, and with what satisfaction I visit you; but I should have little compassion for you, and visit you with regret, if your painful state only excited murmurs and discontent. God bless and support you! Continue to give proofs of your patience and fortitude, till death delivers you from all your misery, and, trusting in the mercy of your heavenly Father, you composedly close your eyes?’ The Curate said much more to comfort this poor sick man, and cordially squeezing his hand, slipped a piece of money into it and hastened out of the cottage, because he had heard that another sick man stood in need of his advice.

Charles followed him, and they soon came to a hut, where they saw a still more lamentable sight. A man with a pale disfigured countenance and livid lips was stretched on a bed of half rotten straw. Miserably dirty tattered rags covered his body, but in such a manner that, through the many holes and rents they could see the form of a skeleton. He wished to speak to the Curate, but a violent cough tormented him so that he could not, till he had thrown up great clots of blood from his lungs. ‘Great God, pity me! What excruciating pain!’ groaned he out when the cough ceased for a moment, and fell back exhausted on his wretched bed.

The Curate saw his miserable state, and begged him to try to compose himself, since, by patience, pain itself was softened.

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A few minutes he inquired, what was the matter with him? 'A consumption,' answered he, with a suffocated voice.

'And how did you fall into it?' again inquired the Curate.

The sick man was silent for a moment, then collecting all his strength to raise himself, he gnashed his teeth through anguish, and rose with much difficulty.

'All this misery,' said he, in broken words and a low hollow voice, for his lungs were already half gone, 'all this misery I owe to my intemperance.'

'Some years ago I unfortunately became acquainted with a number of idle, dissolute young men, and they taught me to drink.

'In the morning I drank drams, and in the evening sat at the alehouse till midnight, swallowing strong beer. Thus I neglected my work, and often, when I was half drunk, quarrelled and fought with my neighbours, to whom I was obliged to give money to hush it up. Nay, one of them went to law with me; it cost me a main sight of money, but to be sure I used him very ill. Where could money come from to pay for all this? I sold one piece of ground after another, sheep, cows, horses, clothes, in short, everything was thrown away, and only for drink. And now see what I am become—a beggar.—Oh! and through drunkenness, and drunken broils, I am come to this. Oh! reverend sir, here,' pressing his hand to his side, 'here I feel it.'

He would have said more, but a violent fit of coughing, which almost stopped his breath, prevented him. He struggled and struggled for breath, till he had brought up a quantity of blood, and sighing piteously cast his eyes on his wretched bed. The Curate then said to him, 'Try to compose yourself, unhappy man. You experience the dreadful effects of intemperance. God has given us an appetite to eat and drink, that we may never forget to refresh and nourish our bodies; and if we only eat till our hunger was satisfied, and did not drink till we were thirsty, we should relish our food and preserve our health and strength. But when we take more than is necessary, to please the palate, it all turns to poison; we become indolent, and bad humours break out in nasty sores, and at last corrupt the blood,

stomach, lungs, and, in short, the whole body.' Poverty and sickness follow, and extreme pain, which only ends in an untimely death. Is not this a truth, which I for some years have been repeating to you without effect?'

'O yes, too true,' answered the sick wretch; 'but I did not believe you, because I did not fall sick suddenly. This dreadful cough came on by degrees, and my companions persuaded me it was only a cold, till I had no more money to treat them with; then they left me to starve alone and remember all you had said. Yes, it was all true. I now feel it. What a fool I was not to listen to you, who had only my good at heart.' 'You wish now,' asked the Curate, 'that you had lived a different life?' 'It racks me,' answered the poor wretch, 'when I think what a disorderly life I have led. Gracious God, if I had obeyed thy commands, if I had been temperate, what a happy man should I now be, enjoying my health and the fortune my father left me; instead of that I am lying here sick and in misery—a beggar! Merciful God, have pity on me!' A flood of tears rolled down his pale cheeks, and the Curate and Charles felt both shocked and affected.

The Curate tried to comfort him, and promised to send him some broth. After he had left him, he turned to Charles and said, 'If that poor wretch had repented sooner he might perhaps have avoided all this misery, or at least a great part of it; but now it is too late. It is a fearful thing to put off repentance till a man cannot show by his conduct that he is ashamed of his faults. This example should warn all young people to correct their faults as soon as their troubled conscience tells them they have done wrong, for even a child never does wrong without feeling uneasy.' The Curate turned homewards, intending to take Charles to his parents, after he had taken leave of the family.

CHAPTER VIII.

BETTY, a countrywoman, waited for them at the door, to pay the Curate a small sum he had lent her. He inquired how her farm now went on? She looked him full in the face, and said 'very ill.' 'How so?' enquired the Curate.

Then the woman burst into tears and said, 'I am a miserable creature; I have not had a peaceable hour since I saw my brother-in-law's good luck. Yes, he lives a fine life; he has built a house, and bought, one year, the fine meadow by the church; the next, two more, almost as good. What can I purchase? Nothing! There sit I in the old farm, which my grandmother left me, and so far from being able to build a house or buy meadows, it will be well if I can keep together the little furniture and the poor piece of ground my father gave me. But these things will not last for ever. I hope I shall live long enough to see my boasting brother-in-law with a beggar's wallet at his back. I have known many fine folks, as proud as he, who were at last obliged to leave their farms, ashamed to show their faces, though they had held their heads so high. But I cannot guess where all the money comes from! The rogue must get it by some strange means; if so much could be earned by labour, why cannot I earn it? I never sit with my hands across when there is anything to be done.'

'Good woman,' said the Curate, 'are you sick?'

Betty. God be praised, I have no sickness to complain of.

Curate. And your husband?

Betty. Nothing ails him.

Curate. And your children?

Betty. As gay as larks.

Curate. How are your poultry, and the rest of your live stock?

Betty. Why, I cannot say I have much reason to complain.

Curate. And you have something wholesome to eat and drink every day, I suppose?

Betty. Yes; I never knew what it was to want a meal.

Curate. And yet you call yourself a wretched woman?

Betty. Yes. Can I build a house? Can I purchase a field?

Curate. I now see clearly that you are an unhappy woman. You are well, have sufficient to live on, and have every thing necessary to render your life comfortable; but you indulge a vicious passion, envy, which prevents your enjoying the blessings you possess, and makes you grieve and pine for those heaven has given to your neighbours. Poor woman! as long as you nourish envy, you will eat bitter bread, and enjoy none of the comforts within your reach. Look at yourself in the glass; you had formerly a ruddy fresh colour, and now you are grown quite sallow. Envy is the cause of this change; it has turned the red to yellow. And at night, I know you have not any rest, by your sunk eyes—envy keeps you awake. But what is worse than all, envy has so misled you, that you have told lies of an innocent man, who never did you any harm. What horrid wickedness! Recollect yourself, you have called him a rogue; yet I know that there is not an honester man in the whole village. He has only to thank his constant industry and prudence for living so well in the world. What, do you call that honest friendly man a rogue, who was so kind to you, when your husband was sick at harvest time some years ago? He then worked hard to save your wheat, without expecting any reward.

The woman began to cry; she wished to excuse herself; but the Curate interrupted her, saying, 'Is it possible to call a man so good, so honest, and so friendly, a rogue? You also deprive yourself of all your comfort and pleasure, health and sleep, and render yourself old and ugly before your time. Consider a moment, how foolish you must be, and that envy is a hideous vice.'

The woman saw now that she was envious; she hung down her head, thanked the Curate for his counsel, and went away.

Charles now took leave of the kind family, and the Curate reached his hat and stick to accompany him; but a bird that hung in the window made such a dismal noise, running from one side of the cage to the other, that he stopped a moment, and, looking into the drawer, found that the

poor bird had not one grain of seed left, nor any water. It was a bird George* had caught when it fell from its nest, and hurt its wing, and ever since he had been very fond of it; but he was so taken up this morning with lamenting the death of Pompey, that he had quite forgotten his lark. The Curate was displeased, and called George, bidding him look at his bird. He added, 'See the effects of immoderate sorrow; if I had not observed the poor lark, it would have died with hunger this night; and in the morning we should have had new lamentations, because you neglected your duty.'

George fed the bird, while the Curate and Charles went out through the garden gate.

CHAPTER IX.

THEY soon came to the wood where Charles had lost himself the day before, and to the place where he thought he had seen spirits. Charles could not help laughing when he saw and touched the bushes and branches which had raised such terror in his mind. 'Stop, little man,' said he to a bush, which the wind had made nod the evening before; and propping it up, 'I will teach thee to frighten people.'

'But, sir,' asked he, 'are there no spectres?' 'I believe not,' answered the Curate. 'I have lived some years in the world, and walk in the dark at all hours, and yet I never have seen a spectre. Many people will say that they have seen them, and I will tell you how it happens. Sometimes people see something when it is almost dark, it frightens them, and fear makes them take it for a ghost; then they start and scream, and tell what a frightful spectre they have seen. If you had not returned to the wood to-day, and examined the things which caused you such terror, you would have had some dreadful stories to relate; and you might positively have declared that they were true. Sometimes foolish people play malicious tricks to disturb their acquaintance. I have heard of many of these tricks, I will mention one.

* Ernst.

‘Three officers came some years ago to an inn, and were conducted into the best room. Soon after their superior officer came, and they were obliged to give up the best room to him. This vexed them, and they consulted together how they should play him a trick. As soon as he was asleep, they came into his chamber, with sheets wrapped around them, and danced about his bed. That the general was alarmed at first, you may suppose; but he had great presence of mind and soon guessed the trick, and silently pulling up the sheet he slid out of bed, covering himself with it, without having been perceived by them, and joined in the dance. What, what! four white things! The officers were frightened, hastened out of the room without further consideration, and the next morning declared that the house was haunted.

‘It is thus, my dear Charles, that stories of spirits and haunted houses gain belief; either the people did not see clearly through fear, or others have deceived them. When at night you see something which you do not know what to make of, advance with courage to it, and look more nearly at it, and you will always find that you have deceived yourself, or that some one has played you a trick.’

Charles shook his head, as if he could not believe him, and said, ‘I will tell you a story that is very true. Our old maid sits sometimes in a room till eleven or twelve o’clock: one night there came a little white man, not bigger than me, into the room and continually made a motion with his hand. The maid, who had been told how she ought to behave to such a spirit, should she chance to meet with it, followed it. Then the spirit led her into the cellar, gave her a spade, and said, “Dig in this place;” but observe, “you must not speak a single word.” She dug, and found a great brass kettle full of gold. She went to seize it, crying out what a heap of gold. Then she heard a violent noise, and it all disappeared. What think you of this, sir? Did the maid not see clearly, or did some one play her a trick?’

‘In this case,’ answered the Curate, ‘it was neither the one nor the other; but the old maid has told you a lie as a story to divert you; she knew it was not true. For

there are many people who amuse themselves with inventing such stories, and telling them to children and foolish creatures, who are idle and glad to catch hold of any non-sensical story.

‘Will you not give something to a poor man?’ (cried a voice from behind an oak, which interrupted their discourse). The Curate and Charles looked round to see from whence the voice came, and saw a miserable beggar, who had lost his right arm, and with the left held his hat out to receive charity. The Curate was moved, and gave him a penny; and Charles threw a halfpenny into the hat.

‘How came you to lose your arm?’ said the Curate.

The beggar rose with some trouble and answered, ‘If you will permit me to accompany you, I will tell you. I came into the world as well formed as you; but when I was a child I was a foolish, rash creature. I did nothing but climb and scramble up trees and dangerous places, only for the sake of climbing. My father and mother were always desiring me to be careful. Child, child, my mother would say, pray do not climb up such dangerous places. But I did not mind what they said: if I had obeyed my good parents I should now be another kind of man. One day I saw under our thatch a swallows’ nest. I will soon have that, thought I, and I raised a great ladder against the wall and stepped from it on a rotten board over a window. Crack, crack, went the board, and I fell with it to the ground, and broke my precious arm—my right arm. My father and mother wept, and ran for a surgeon to set it, but before they could find him it was terribly swelled. He tormented me above three weeks, drawing one splinter out after another. At last the whole arm was black, black as a coal, and nothing could save it; it must be cut off. It was a dreadful operation, and afterwards they took a red-hot iron and held it to the part to stop the blood. So I became a cripple! My father loved me, and when he died he left me all the money he had pinched himself to save for me. But as I could not work I soon spent it, and now I must live on what I beg from charitable people. My brothers,

who received nothing from my father, earn a comfortable livelihood, for they have arms, while I am wretched, and often sick through hunger and cold. Truly, sir, sound limbs are of more value than gold.'

The Curate tried to comfort him. 'Be not troubled, poor man,' said he; 'if you are an honest man, and bear your infirmity with patience, and hurt no one, you will always find charitable people who will have compassion on you. Believe me, you will never want necessities.'

'Very well,' answered the man; 'but, sir, if I could only be of some use! I eat the bread of idleness. Is it not dreadful for me to see all men working for one another, and that I alone must be a burthen to them? I often wish to die, that I might no more be pointed at as a miserable creature.'

The Curate gave him sixpence, and bid him call sometimes at his house, and if he was sober and honest he would try to find him some employment.

CHAPTER X.

WHILE they were conversing in this manner, they heard the sound of coach wheels. Curiosity led Charles to advance a few steps before them, and saw it peep from behind the bushes. 'Is it possible! yes, indeed, indeed, sir, sir, here comes my dear father and mother,' cried he, stretching his arms out towards the coach. The coachman stopped; he flew like the wind, and threw his arms first round his father's neck, then his mother's, and could only bring out 'Dear father!' 'dear mother!' His parents were also almost melted into tears, and held their lost son in their arms a few minutes without speaking a word. At last the father broke silence and asked, 'Had you no companion with you?' 'A companion,' answered Charles; 'O yes, there he is.' Scarcely had he finished these words before he sprung out of the carriage, caught the Curate's hand, led him to his father and said, 'This is the good man who yesterday saved my life.'

Mr. Jones stepped out, and taking the Curate's hand, said, as he cordially shook it, 'Dear sir, how shall I thank you for all you have done for my poor lost boy? Pray come into the coach and speak to my wife. We came this way to meet you and spare you part of your walk, and now we will carry you home.'

As soon as the Curate was seated, 'Drive on,' cried Charles to the coachman. 'But,' the Curate said, 'be not in such haste, my young friend; I must make that poor man known to your father.' He beckoned to him, and related in a few words his history. Mr. Jones was moved with compassion, and threw half-a-crown into the poor man's hat, and his wife followed his example. The miserable creature's eyes sparkled with joy, and he almost bowed to the ground as he drew back: at the same time Mr. Jones squeezed the Curate's hand and thanked him for having procured him the pleasure of making glad a poor man's heart.

As they drove along Charles was obliged to relate circumstantially what had happened to him the day before, and how kindly he had been treated by the Curate and his family. Mr. Jones and his wife became more and more attached to this good family the longer they listened to Charles, and eagerly wished soon to see them altogether. They desired the coachman to drive faster, and away they went full drive, throwing up the dust and rattling over the gravel, and splashing through the little brooks which ran across the road. Now they entered a narrow rocky road, yet Charles was very unwilling to let the horses slacken their pace, though the way was so rough. But could he have foreseen the disagreeable accident which awaited them in the narrow lane, he would have wished to have gone a mile round to have avoided it; for they had hardly advanced a hundred yards before they met another coach.

'Make way!' cried John, the driver of the other coach. 'Fool,' replied Nicholas, Mr. Jones's coachman, 'how would you have me make way? Do you not see the rock on one side and the mountain on the other?' 'Why did you enter such a narrow rough road?' asked John. 'And if you were so well acquainted with it,' sneeringly retorted Nicholas,

‘why did you venture?’ Then the two coachmen began to curse and swear at each other in a most dreadful manner.

Mr. Gruff,* the man who sat in the other coach, called out to his coachman, ‘Knock the rascal down if he will not clear the way.’ This brutal speech roused Mr. Jones’s anger; he snatched at his stick, nor could his wife or the Curate detain him. Mr. Gruff jumped out at the same time, and they advanced angrily towards each other. The coachmen sprang from their seats, threw aside their whips, and began to box so unmercifully that the blood soon streamed from their heads. Mr. Jones and Gruff raised their voices more and more. Mrs. Jones wept, ‘For God’s sake, my dear, come back!’ Charles lamented, ‘Nicholas, Nicholas, pray make it up!’ The Curate tried to soften matters by good words; but all this was of no use. There was a dreadful bustle, and the Curate expected every instant to see the two gentlemen proceed to blows, as well as the coachmen.

At last Mr. Jones recollected himself; he stretched out his hand in a friendly manner, saying, ‘I beg your pardon, sir, I am too hasty.’

Mr. Gruff. What then? What then? Why are you so hasty?

Mr. Jones. It is very foolish to be so, and if we do not moderate our anger, we may in the heat of dispute forget ourselves and fall on each other like wild animals, or like those two men.

Mr. Gruff. It might happen; but perhaps you think that I am afraid of you?

Mr. Jones. No; but would you be so cruel as to strike an innocent man?

Mr. Gruff. If he provoked me, what would you have me do?

Mr. Jones. And if you had beaten me till I could no longer stand, would that have moved my coach one inch out of the way?

Mr. Gruff. No, to be sure; whoever thought of such a thing?

Mr. Jones. Would it not have been more reasonable if I

* Herr Brauss.

had ordered the coachman to back his horses till he made room for yours to pass?

Mr. Gruff. Yes, if you would do that?

Mr. Jones. I will do it, with pleasure.

Mr. Gruff. Why did you not do it at first?

Mr. Jones. I should have done it very readily if your coachman, and, excuse me, sir, if you had used different words.

Mr. Gruff was softened by this frank treatment; he took his offered hand, saying, 'Forgive me, sir, I feel that I have been very unreasonable and rude! I am the cause of all—my violence encouraged my coachman; I ought not to have suffered him to use such gross language.'

The Curate was very glad to see that this disagreeable affair had taken such an unexpected turn. He caught Mrs. Jones's hand, and said, 'How noble it is when a man can moderate his anger! *How beautiful is forbearance!* A violent enemy has often been so touched by it, as to become ever after a firm friend. What dignity has this self-command given to your husband's appearance; my heart begins to warm to him.'

While all this passed, the coachmen were on the ground fighting like two bull-dogs. 'My dear sir,' said the Curate, 'we have no time to lose; let us part these mad men, or we shall never be able to pursue our way.'

They ran to the furious coachmen, but they were so covered with blood and mud that they could not distinguish the colour of their coats. They called to them, but anger is deaf; they forgot everything in their fury; and all attempts to separate them only rendered them more violent. At last John's eye met his master's, and he would have disengaged himself, but Nicholas flung him so unmercifully down again, that his head struck against one of the wheels of the coach, and he remained motionless on the ground. Now when John could no longer resist him, Nicholas first came to himself; he grew calm in a moment, and would have raised John, but there appeared no more life in him; his countenance was pale, and his head fell on his shoulder. Nicholas shook him gently, crying out at the same time, 'John, John, canst thou not hear me?' but John answered never a word. He

then leaped up, struck his bloody hands violently against both sides of his own head, and screamed out in an agony, 'God be merciful to me ! What have I done? What a fury I have been. I have, I have killed thee, John, my old friend John !'

They were all terrified by these lamentations, and surrounding poor John, joined in them. The Curate had most presence of mind and resolution. 'What signifies all this sorrow and compassion,' said he; 'let us see how we can help the man.' He bid Charles bring a little water in his hat from a small stream which ran among the rocks, and Mrs. Jones held her smelling bottle to the poor man's nose, while the Curate rubbed his temples till there was an appearance of returning life. They all stood silent, eagerly watching over him, and joy appeared in every face when he again opened his eyes. Nicholas was almost frantic with delight, he squeezed John's hand, begged him to forgive him, and tried again to help him up. But John was so weak his legs could not support him, he tottered, and would have fallen if Nicholas had not held him up.

Now what was to be done? Mr. Gruff had not a man to drive him, nor Nicholas anyone to assist him to back the horses. They all stood lamenting a quarter of an hour, and could not think of any means to go forward. At last the Curate said, 'If we do not find an expedient, we must pass the night here, and perhaps this poor man may lose his life by our delay. Come, let us not trifle away any more time, one of the coaches must first be drawn back, which shall it be? 'Mine, mine,' cried out Mr. Jones and Mr. Gruff in the same breath. They would both gladly have had the merit of yielding first. The Curate considered a moment, and then observed that, out of respect to the lady, it appeared most reasonable that Mr. Gruff's coach should be backed to let them hasten home, and then Nicholas might return to assist Mr. Gruff. 'But what can I do alone with John,' answered he in a compassionate tone; 'suppose he should faint again with loss of blood?' 'I know of no other way,' interrupted the Curate, 'than to take him in Mr. Jones's coach to my house; and I will take care of him till he is perfectly well.'

And now must the people, who an hour before would not yield a foot of their pretended right, submit to the greatest inconvenience. First they brought John, all covered with mud and blood, to seat him in Mr. Jones's coach; and the Curate said to Nicholas, with some indignation, as he helped to lift him in, '*Behold the fruits of anger!* When men give themselves up to anger, they act foolishly, and know no more what they are about; and after the fit of anger is over, they sorely repent of their folly, as you do now.'

Nicholas drew the coach back with great difficulty; large drops of sweat ran down his cheeks; he was so fatigued, though they all assisted him, except Mrs. Jones and Charles; they sat in the coach, and supported John. After this laborious business, Nicholas mounted his box and drove slowly and mournfully forward.

Mr. Gruff followed them with his eyes till they were out of sight. He would willingly have accompanied them, but he was obliged to stay and watch his horses till Nicholas came back. Poor man, the time seemed to him very long; he remained alone two hours in the place of his servant; he might have amused himself, but he could think of nothing but his foolish conduct, and how little his anger must have made him look.

CHAPTER XI.

MEANTIME Mr. Jones and his company advanced towards the village where the Curate lived. But they were continually terrified; for John fainted several times, falling first on one then on another.

It may easily be supposed what nasty figures they all appeared, covered with mud and blood; but they would willingly have borne all this, if John had been better. He grew worse and worse, and they were dreadfully afraid that he would die in the coach before they reached the Curate's house. They every moment looked out of the window to see if they could see the steeple rising out of the trees; and bid Nicholas drive as fast as possible to ease them of their fears. But the coach road was three or four miles round.

Nicholas did all he could to hasten forward ; yet they were an hour on the road, and their apprehensions made it appear as long as four or five.

When at last they arrived at the door, their first care was about John. They wished to lead him into the house, but the motion was too much for him, and he sunk senseless into the Curate's arms. He prayed some countrymen, whom curiosity had gathered round the coach, to assist to carry him into the house.

It is easy to suppose the terror this sight raised in the family. Henrietta looked at her husband, when she saw them bring in a stranger who seemed to be dead. The children cried, Mr. Jones and his wife stood mute, and the Curate himself walked in an agitated manner once or twice up and down the chamber. At last he said, let one instantly go for Mr. Smith* the surgeon. George started up immediately, and ran downstairs. How tedious did the quarter of an hour appear. They went every moment to the window to see if he was coming ; and from the window to John, felt his pulse, rubbed his temples, held vinegar to his nose ; but all would not do ; he did not open his eyes. 'He is dead,' cried the Curate's wife. 'He is dead,' cried Mrs. Jones. 'Yes, yes, he is dead,' said the children after them, and they all began to weep.

The Curate himself was alarmed ; he walked sometimes quick, sometimes slow, up and down the room, looked earnestly out of the window, then returning to John soon would leave him with a sigh, and yet come back again. In one of his walks he turned on Nicholas, who stood stupid with grief in a dark corner. 'What do you do here,' asked he ; 'I thought you were returned long ago to Mr. Guff?' 'I could not go,' replied he, 'if it was to save my life, till I know what will become of John.' They all tried to persuade him ; but he could only answer, that he could not leave that place till he knew what would become of John. While they were disputing, Mr. Smith, the surgeon, entered. They all flocked round him, eager to hear if he thought the poor man had any life in him.

* Gregorius !

'We shall see; we shall see,' said he, and made them relate in a few words the sad accident; he approached the bed, took a fine feather out of the pillow, and held it to John's nose; the down on the feather moved. 'He lives still,' cried he; 'see, he breathes; but let us strip off his clothes and open a vein.' He opened it and the blood flowed. A moment after he breathed with more force, opened his eyes, and looked round with a stare of wild astonishment. 'Where—where am I?' said he with a weak voice. 'By me, by me!' cried Nicholas; 'surely you know me again, dear John?' John groaned and shut his eyes. The surgeon examined his head; they all had their eyes fixed on him, but he remained silent, till Mr. Jones asked, 'Is there any hope?' Then every one joined in the inquiry but Nicholas, and his eyes were fastened on the surgeon's face, while he stood with his mouth open, almost afraid to breathe. 'Yes,' said the surgeon, 'there is hope; and, if nothing unexpected happens, he may be able to return to his master in a few days.'

They all rejoiced when they heard this news. 'God be thanked!' cried Nicholas, 'for the good hopes; now I am happy, and I will go with a light heart and drive Mr. Gruff home.' Then he went, and found Mr. Gruff very uneasy and impatient.

After John was placed comfortably in bed, the curate desired the children to be very quiet. 'We may now all be content,' said he, 'since there is hope. Oh, what a charming thing is hope! How satisfied we are, when in any vexatious situations we can still look forward to something good which awaits us.'

CHAPTER XII.

It now grew late in the evening, and the Curate, with reason, supposed that his guests must by this time be very hungry. He requested his wife to let them quickly have something to eat; this was soon done; she brought out all that her pantry contained. It was not much; but all was good of its kind, and produced with such neatness and

order, that the whole company sat down with a sharp appetite, and would have enjoyed their meal, if they had not been interrupted just as they began to eat. John's room was over the parlour, and they heard such loud groans suddenly issue from it, that they hastily rose, and all ran anxiously to ask what was the matter?—what he wanted? 'Ah! my poor wife, my poor children! what will they think when they find I do not come home to-night? If they hear of my quarrel, if they do not hear whether I am still alive, what will become of them?'

The whole company felt for him, and looked at each other, not knowing what to say to comfort him, his grief was so reasonable. Mr. Jones drew his wife aside, and said, 'I can easily represent to myself the trouble this poor man must endure—if such an accident had happened to me, and I could not return to you.' 'My love,' interrupted she, 'if you were once to stay from home, and I heard that you laid at the point of death—dearest life, I could not bear that!' Charles began to weep, and said, 'You die, dear father, and I not be with you, I should die of grief!'

'The poor man, the poor woman and her children, I wish I could think of some way to help them,' said Mr. Jones. 'Dear father,' said Charles, 'I am sure you can think of something.' Mr. Jones rubbed his forehead and said, 'True, I could think of something; but then it would be expensive.' 'I will not ask for sixpence before Christmas,' eagerly answered Charles, 'if you will help this poor man.' 'Well,' replied Mr. Jones, 'we will see what can be done.'* He then turned to the Curate to inquire if he could procure him a messenger, to set off directly for John's little hut, and inform his family that he was out of danger, and with people who would take care of him. 'It would not be very difficult,' replied the Curate, 'but as it is late, and the way long and dreary, he will expect to be well paid for his trouble.' 'I would willingly give a guinea,' said Mr. Jones; 'I should think that would be sufficient?' 'Yes, more than will be

* In the original the mother and son both offer their purses, the father offers five dollars, and the curate finds a peasant who will go for two.

expected,' interrupted the Curate; 'I dare say I shall procure a strong lad in this neighbourhood for half the money.'

He went out and soon returned with one, who had seized with joy the opportunity of earning some money, and promised to deliver his message very faithfully. 'And the surgeon,' said Mr. Jones, 'I will settle with him, and discharge all the other expenses; pray let him want for nothing.' 'I will take care that he wants for nothing,' replied the Curate; 'but you, sir, need not be at any further expense.' 'Nay,' interrupted Mr. Jones, 'you have already had trouble enough, without being obliged to pay the surgeon. You, my good friend, have too much sense to indulge false pride; your poor parishioners want all the money you can spare; you must let me settle this matter.' The Curate shook him by the hand and consented. They then approached John's bed, and informed him that a message had been sent to his wife, and that he and his family would be taken care of till he was able to work. 'Indeed, indeed,' cried John, 'have you sent to my wife, and will you be so kind to me? God reward you; you are a tender-hearted man; your compassion has saved my life, and made me quite content. Now I shall go quietly to sleep, since I know that my wife and children will not be fretting all night.' The whole company felt pleased with John for having such an affection for his family, and the meal they returned to seemed sweeter than ever.

During supper time the Curate spoke more than usual, and they were all cheerful. 'Is it not ordered in a wonderfully wise manner,' said he, 'that a good man always grows sad when he sees another sad?—that is to say, he feels compassion. It is really true that compassion renders many hours uneasy, which might have passed pleasantly, if we were not disturbed by the misery which others suffer. For instance, we should have gone on quietly with our meal, if John's groans had not affected us. But pity, the compassionate feeling I have mentioned, is very useful, as it impels us to assist our suffering fellow-creatures. As soon as Charles felt compassion, he offered to give up all the money he was to receive till Christmas, but, before he felt this emotion, he did not think of it. Thus we find by com-

passion a number of persons have been saved, who might have been lost, if others had not been disturbed by their sufferings. And when we have comforted an afflicted man, we are so light, so gay, that every pleasure has a finer relish—as you, Charles, now find that apple pie* has. Am I not right?’

Charles smiled and said, ‘That is very true; I never before thought my supper tasted so good—and when I think that John will soon be well, I am so glad!——’

‘Good Charles,’ continued the Curate, ‘exercise your compassion instead of trying to stifle it for present ease. If in future you see a man in distress or pain, and your mind is troubled, do not soon try to overcome this anguish of heart; but rather imagine yourself in the place of the sufferer, and think what you should feel if you were in the same situation. Then would your heart soon tell you what you ought to do; and pity would procure you many such pleasant moments as you now enjoy.’

CHAPTER XIII.

THE Curate would have continued the conversation, if he had not been interrupted by the maid, who whispered something in his ear. ‘How?’ asked the Curate, ‘will he not come, though I have so earnestly invited him? I did not believe that there had been in the world a man with such a hard, unfeeling heart. Well, if he will not come to me, I will go to him.’

He rose hastily, took his stick, and was going out, but the company seemed disturbed, and stopped him to ask what disagreeable accident had happened? ‘I beg your pardon for leaving you a few moments; I am uneasy, but I hope that I shall soon return much easier.’ He then went out and left them unable to guess why he went so abruptly.

The cause was this: his eldest brother, for above half a year, had not behaved to him like a brother. He had not written to him as usual, and when the Curate wrote to him he did not answer his letter; and he had passed three times through the village and never visited him. Now this evening

* ‘Butterbrod !’

the Curate had heard from the surgeon that his brother was there, and intended to sleep at the inn. He therefore sent his maid privately to entreat him to spend the evening at his house ; but he rudely answered that he would not come. The Curate then went to him.

When he opened the room door he saw his brother in deep thought, walking backwards and forwards with hasty strides and frightful gestures. He stood still at the door a few moments till his brother perceived him, and, turning fiercely on him, asked what he wanted ?

Curate. I am come to visit you.

Brother. Did I invite you ?

Curate. No, indeed ; but I think it would not have been right to have had a brother who once loved me, and whom I still love, so near me and not to have called to see him. I invited you, why did you not come ?

Brother. Unworthy, hypocritical man, do you ask why ?

Curate. I do ; nay, I ask still more—why have you passed three times through my village and have not visited me ?

Brother. Do you wish to know ?

Curate. Certainly I wish it, and I shall not leave you before you have told me.

Brother. Know it then—I hate you !

Curate. Hate me ?

Brother. Shall I say it again ?—I hate—I detest you !

Curate. And you do not wish me any good ?

Brother. No.

Curate. Nay, perhaps you wish some misfortune may befall me ?

Brother. I heartily wish that no good may ever reach you and your wicked wife !

Curate. Brother ! brother, take care, God hears you ! Can such thoughts rise in your heart against me who have ever been an affectionate brother—and against my innocent wife ?

Brother. Yes, because you are my brother ; if a stranger had injured me it would not have hurt me half as much.

Curate. I injured you ?—How ?

Brother. I suppose you wish to excuse yourself ?

Curate. No, not excuse myself ; but to know what I have done ?

Brother. Is it not to you I owe—I tremble with rage when I think of your wickedness! I cannot go on ——

Curate. What wickedness?

Brother. Is it not wickedness to separate a brother from his promised wife?

Curate. What, to whom were you attached? I cannot guess what you mean to say.

Brother. Did you not know that I wished to marry your wife's sister?

Curate. No, I knew nothing of it.

Brother. Did you not know that she was inclined to consent?

Curate. I knew nothing of the matter.

Brother. Do you not know that you have prejudiced her against me, and persuaded her to marry another?

Curate. All this is news to me.

Brother. Now, this is contemptible! First to injure me, and then to have the insolence to deny it.

Curate. But, dear brother, did I ever injure you before?

Brother. Never.

Curate. How can you then believe that I should suddenly become such a hypocritical wretch?

Brother. It was with great difficulty that I could believe you so wicked, but the whole conduct of your sister-in-law gave rise to my suspicions against you.

Curate. And what was there in her conduct to give rise to it?

Brother. I gave her to understand that I wished to marry her; she heard me so mildly, and promised in such a soft tone of voice to give me soon a final answer, that I firmly believed that she would accept of my offered hand. Soon after she spent a short time at your house, and when she returned she sent me an absolute refusal, and married Mr. Roberts. What could I then suppose, but that she went to ask your advice, and you advised her to marry your friend Roberts, whom you ever had a greater affection for than for me?

Curate. When did you make the proposal?

Brother. Towards the latter end of February.

Curate. But what if I could prove to you that she was engaged to Mr. Roberts the foregoing year?

Brother. I wish I could see that proved!

Curate. You shall soon see it.

Saying so the Curate hastily left the room, and returned in a few minutes with a letter which his sister-in-law had written to him the November of the preceding year, in which she mentioned to him that she was engaged to Mr. Roberts, but she wished that it might still remain a secret some time longer. The angry man read this letter twice over, and stood motionless a few minutes as if he had been thunderstruck, then hastily exclaimed—‘Is it possible? Have I been so unjust, and suspected you without a cause?’

Curate. You see how it is.

Brother. I have injured you, my brother; how could I harbour such vile suspicions, best of men! saying so, he timidly took his hand. Pray forgive me, I will never again, while I live, indulge such unjust suspicions.

Curate (with his eyes full of tears). What a happy hour is this, in which I again find my brother!

Brother. Good brother, I am sufficiently punished. Suspicion and hatred are terrible things; they have continually tormented me. Suspicion produced hatred; because I believed ill of you, I wished ill to happen to you. Since that time I have not had a contented hour. If I thought of you, if I only read your name, I felt my heart beat quick, I trembled, and, forgive me, suffered curses to escape from my lips. I was ill-humoured and rude to the people about me. At night I had no rest, and if I did slumber, in my dreams I quarrelled with you. O, how my heart used formerly to throb with joy when from the hill I saw your village; and how I spurred my horse on quickly to be with you! But since the time I have hated you I have gnashed my teeth when I discovered this little village, and the nights I passed at the inn were always dreadful to me. Ah, how unhappy is the man who hates another!

Curate. Come, let us forget all, my brother, and from this hour have no more unquiet nights from hatred.

The violent man now looked mild, and, accepting his brother's invitation, accompanied him to his house.

Mr. Jones and his wife were very desirous to know what had disturbed the Curate, and where he was gone; and a look of anxiety, which they observed on Mrs. Benson's countenance, made them still more curious. While they were endeavouring to converse about indifferent things, the Curate entered with his brother, whom they did not know. Now, thought they, the whole mystery will be cleared up.

'What! is it you, dear brother?' cried out Mrs. Benson. 'Is it you, who come to us again with such an affectionate friendly countenance? What a happy day!' added she, tenderly pressing his hand. Then she ran to bring him some refreshment, while the children expressed their joy. They clung about him, crying, 'Dear uncle! dear uncle!' one brought a nightcap, another his slippers, and the little Caroline brought out of the closet part of the cake which Mrs. Jones had given her, and thrust it into his hand. The uncle was delighted when he saw how eagerly the whole family testified the pleasure his return gave them. 'It is affection which renders us happy,' he exclaimed; 'if we love others, they will love us in return. I should have missed all this pleasure if I still fostered hatred against my brother.'

Mr. Jones begged him to explain what he meant by these hints. 'May I relate it?' asked the Curate, looking at his brother. 'O yes,' answered he; 'but I should like better to relate it myself.' And he began to relate the whole misunderstanding; how he had first nourished suspicions against his brother, and afterwards hated him; what sad days and miserable nights he had passed since; and how comfortable he now found himself, because love had taken the place of hatred!

During this relation time ran away without their perceiving it. They would have remained still longer together; but just as Mr. Jones was beginning to give them another example of a man of his acquaintance who, by nourishing hatred, had deprived himself of all his comforts, the clock struck twelve,* and they recollected that it was full time to go to rest.

* This bit of old German manners has been altered here. The watchman called under the window

Hört, ihr Herren,
Lasst euch sagen,
Die Glocke hat zwölf geschlagen.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE whole family rose very early, and as soon as they were dressed they went together to John's room to inquire how he found himself? 'Very well,' answered he; 'I was in great pain till long after midnight, and could not close my eyes; but about two o'clock I fell asleep, and I cannot describe how comfortably I found that sleep. All my pain left me; and now I am awake I feel as if I was new born. Yes, sleep is a charming thing! It frees us from all care and pain, and gives us new strength and vigour. He that sleeps well has always reason to be thankful. I never felt, till now, its full value! In future, when any one wishes me a good night, I shall thank them with all my heart; and if I have had a good night, I shall not complain if I am obliged to work hard in the day. What a shame it is that men live who abuse sleep; for when we sleep too long, we are indolent the whole day! I often think of madam, whom I have been coachman to these four years; she sleeps, as true as I am here, almost ten hours on the stretch, and when she rises she finds nothing right,—the servants are scolded all round, and she has often called me a blockhead when I have told her that my oats were out. Sleep appears to me like beans and bacon; if we eat moderately we are strengthened; but if we are gluttons bad humours break out, we are heavy and idle, so that, in the whole world, nothing appears right.'

While the company conversed with John, they heard a noise in Henry's* room. He went first to bed, and by sleeping an hour longer than the rest of the family, became so stupid and heavy, that he was attacked by a certain disorder called ill-humour. It is a very disagreeable one; and, in the morning, arises from that kind of sluggish stupidity which men feel when they have slept longer than nature requires. Those who are under the influence of this disorder expect that everything should be directed by their whims; and, if the least trifle goes contrary to their foolish humour, they murmur and scold though they want nothing. All the family felt the good effects of sleep as well as John,

* Fritz.

and were cheerfully preparing to discharge the duties of the day, except Henry; but his ill-humour, which arose from indulging himself too long in bed till he grew stupid and sick, made him very uncomfortable to himself, and troublesome to others.

While he was in bed, a poor boy brought a quail to sell;* and George, who loved his brother and sister, bought it for Henry. He hid the bird under his coat, and crept into Henry's room. 'Oh, good morning, good morning, Mr. Lie-a-bed,' said he, 'you have almost lost your breakfast.' 'Hold your tongue,' cried he out peevishly; 'why did you not wake me? you were very ill-natured; you let me sleep on purpose that you might play alone with Charles.' 'You do not know what you are talking about,' interrupted George; 'I have called you above ten times, and you would not get up; it is hard to scold me for your own laziness.' Then Henry grew still more ill-humoured, and called out, 'Mother! mother!' His mother ran quickly, almost afraid that some accident had happened to him, and asked him what he wanted? 'George laughs at me; he called me a lie-a-bed; yet he never waked me' But the mother soon perceived that George was innocent, and that Henry was stupid and out of humour; so she bade him rise quickly and speak in a kinder manner to his brother. 'Rouse yourself, my child,' added she, 'or you will spend an indolent, uncomfortable day.'

Meantime George slipped out of the room with his quail. On the stairs he happened to meet Caroline. That affectionate girl began to smile when she saw him; he kissed her, and said, 'Guess what I have under my coat?' The little girl thought it was a cake or an apple; but George said it was something alive. 'Is it a frog, a sparrow, or a little dog?' asked she. He then let the head peep out, and she began to jump for joy when he told her that she should have it, because she was not out of humour, like Henry. She ran to her mother and told her how good George had been to her. Henry saw her with her bird, and longed for it; but Caroline did not mind him or his angry looks.

Scarcely had the tender mother reached the bottom of

* Also a young fighting cock, but this has been suppressed.

the stairs when she heard Henry call out again, 'Mother! mother!'

Mrs. Benson, who at first had spoken kindly to him, was now displeased; she returned, and when she opened the door Henry saw that she had no longer a smiling face. She frowned and asked, 'What do you want now, naughty boy?' 'My half-boots are not here,' answered he, weeping; 'I must have my half-boots.' 'They are at the cobbler's; you must put on your shoes to-day.' So saying she left the room, left the foolish child sitting on the side of his bed; and there he sat weeping as bitterly as if some great misfortune had happened to him.

But in the parlour was nothing but cheerfulness; the guests were treated with coffee for breakfast, and, because it was a holiday, the children had each two cups of coffee and three slices of white bread and butter. It is true poor Henry had none, for he had neither washed his face nor combed his hair.

A number of little amusing stories were told, and they all joked and laughed. George and Caroline brought out all their pictures and playthings, which were admired by all the guests. But when they collected them to put them by they were surprised, and asked, in a tone of joy, 'What is this? where did that come from?' for Mrs. Jones had, unperceived by them, slipped some pretty pictures among their own. Poor Henry! had he been there he would certainly have had some of those pretty pictures.

The company then prepared to go in the coach to a neighbouring wood, and pass the morning there. 'Am I to go? Am I to go?' asked George and Caroline, and their mother looked at them with such a smiling face, that they soon perceived she did not intend to leave them at home. What pleasure did they promise themselves! they kissed their mother, and jumped for joy. The horses were quickly brought out of the stable and harnessed; and when all but the children had seated themselves in the coach, George missed Henry. 'Is not Henry to go?' asked he, addressing his mother in a sorrowful tone. 'If he is ready let him come,' answered she.

Then George sprang upstairs to tell his brother. But he was disappointed in his good-natured hope. There he still sat on the side of the bed scratching his head; he had not yet drawn on his stockings; and because he could not have his half-boots, he would not put on his clothes. George soon saw that it would be vain to wait for him, for he knew his mother would not detain the carriage till an ill-humoured boy was dressed; he therefore returned directly, got into the coach, and off it drove.

When Henry heard the rolling of the coach, and learned that the whole company were gone to take an airing, and had left him behind, he cried bitterly, stamped with his feet, and behaved like a foolish child. Who knows what he might have done, if an old nurse had not brought him to himself. She advised him to put on his clothes directly, and follow the company, to beg his father and mother to forgive him; 'and perhaps,' added she, 'they may permit you to partake of their pleasure.'

After some soothing and encouragement, he resolved to follow her advice; he then ran across the fields and met the carriage, but not before he was tired and out of breath. His father and mother did not receive him with their accustomed kindness; nay, he was obliged to listen to a very severe reproof for his obstinacy; but after he had humbly acknowledged his fault, and promised to behave better for the future, they allowed him to stay with the company. If he had kept his word, he might still have enjoyed much pleasure; but he soon let them see that he had not yet conquered his ill-humour.

George proposed a play in which they all might engage; they fixed on one called the Hunter, and the open down before the wood was a fine place for the play. But Henry found no pleasure in this game; he insisted on their playing at blindman's buff. The little company tried to convince him that he was very unreasonable to expect them all to do just what he pleased; but he heeded them not. And when they saw that he would not pursue them, they tried to coax him till he turned rudely round from them; then they began to play without him. Charles was the Hunter, George the

dog, and Caroline the hare. Charles began the chase, crying out several times, 'Leveret, hide thyself, the dog is coming to bite thee! close! close!' The leveret exerted all its powers to escape from the dog, and when it came near, pretended to cry like a hare; at last it was caught, and they all burst out in a loud laugh.

Henry saw with much vexation their common joy; he was tired of himself and his ill-humour; yet he was so stubborn and foolish that he would not make one in their party. He imagined that Charles or George would again have invited him to play with them, and he would gladly have accepted of the invitation; but they thought of no such thing; none of them pressed a little obstinate boy who had been so long out of humour to join in their play. Then he threw himself, full of sorrow, under a tree, and lamented his folly. 'I am very uncomfortable—how unhappy has my ill-humour made me! It has to-day already deprived me of the quail my brother bought for me, and my breakfast; besides, I have offended my parents, and the strangers look black on me—how much pleasure have I lost by ill-humour! No one wishes to have any thing to do with me, though I now am sorry. Oh, I will never again be so foolish!' Whilst he was thus bemoaning himself, his father passed by with Mrs. Jones, who had hold of his arm; and as soon as he observed Henry, he went up to him and asked what was the matter with him? Why he did not make one in the play with his brother and sister? He was ashamed to answer, turned his face away, and held his hands before his eyes. 'What have you done?' said the father again. 'Speak.' 'I am ashamed of myself,' answered he; 'I cannot tell it.' 'You are ashamed,' replied the father; 'you are afraid of my reproofs; you have done something wrong. For those who feel shame always know that they have done something wrong. Speak, what is it?' Then he related, shedding many tears, how foolishly and ill-humouredly he had behaved all day, and how much trouble he had brought on himself.

The father pitied him; but desired him at the same time to try to govern his temper, and be for the future a good boy, then he would no more feel that kind of shame which

made him afraid to look his father in the face. 'Do you,' continued he, 'still desire to play with your companions?' 'Very much,' answered he, 'only I am afraid they will now refuse to play with me.' 'You do not deserve, indeed, a kind reception,' said the father; 'but if you wish to be more sociable, if you will try to give up your own will to others, come with me, I will intercede for you.' Then Henry wiped away his tears, and taking hold of his father's hand, went with downcast eyes to join his playfellows. They received him gladly, when their father assured them that for the future he would no more tease them through his ill-humour.

He joined them, and they went to play again with fresh pleasure, now they had a hare and a leveret to hunt.

CHAPTER XV.

HENRY made a fine hare, and was so nimble that he sprang through the bushes, and they caught him with difficulty after he had advanced far into the wood.

But by this chance they made a discovery which they rejoiced at. They came suddenly on four fine healthy looking boys, who were amusing themselves by playing with a ball. They were the sons of the forester, who lived not far from hence. The huntsman, dog, and hares were so pleased with this discovery, that they ceased playing to look at the flying ball, which these boys threw from one to another. Yes, it seemed as if they were all at once tired of hunting, and wished to begin to play at ball. 'Nay,' Henry said aloud, 'if I had my ball here, we might also play at ball.' Scarcely had Henry said so, when one of the boys came up to them and said, 'If you wish for a ball, wait a moment, and I will run to the house and bring you one;' and all the rest said, 'O yes, run quickly and bring it.'

Away he ran, but, before he could come back, one of his brothers offered to lend them his ball till he returned. The children refused, because they felt that they ought not to disturb their pleasure to amuse themselves. But they continued to press them, till they all agreed to play together.

This afforded them new pleasure; some struck the ball in the air, and others received it as it fell. Nay, they were quite delighted when Charles, who was very expert at the game, made the ball rise almost out of sight, and when George ran to catch it, as it was falling at a great distance from the place it was thrown from. They were so amused, that they did not think of returning to their parents, but played one game after another.

Who knows how much longer they might have played, if the Curate had not called them. He came up to them, and desired them to come back, because Mr. Jones thought it time to proceed on his journey. Seeing the ball they were playing with, he inquired where they had found it, or who gave it to them? 'One of these good-natured boys,' answered George, 'we are playing with. You cannot think how good-natured they were. As soon as Henry wished for a ball one of them ran to their house for it, and another lent us his, that we might not be tired with waiting.' 'And did this civil behaviour please you,' asked he. 'Very much,' cried they all; 'how we wish that we could do something to please them.' 'I too am glad,' continued the Curate, 'to meet with such good children; pray ask them to walk with us, that my wife and guests may see them.' It was not necessary to speak twice, they ran to their new friends, and led them, a little against their will, forward to the company.

The little boys blushed at being praised for doing what their father ever bid them do, and what he always did himself; for a beggar never came through the forest without receiving a slice of bread and a draught of small beer. He used to say to his boys, that the child who did not give part of its playthings to another, should be left to play alone—and what child can find pleasure in playing alone?

One day they had quarrelled about a kite; each would insist that it belonged to him. The father gave them four kites, which they were to call their own; but as they were so unsociable, he would not allow them to play together; and what pleasure was there in looking at a kite, though it mounted almost to the clouds, when they could not call out, 'See! see! how high the kite flies!' In a few days they

begged their father to take back three of the kites, and let them play together. It was the same thing with their tops, marbles, &c.; there was no amusement in playing with them alone, and whenever they quarrelled, their father only punished them by making the selfish boy play in a little yard by himself.

After the company had asked the boys several questions, to which they gave modest answers, the Curate said to his children, 'Next Monday you know you are to have a little feast, after all the cherries are gathered,* and would you not wish for more company?' 'Yes, indeed,' answered George; 'may I ask these good boys to come?' The father nodded, and he turned to them—'Yes, pray come next Monday, and we shall be so happy together. I will show you my garden, and you shall eat some of the pears off my own tree.' 'Yes, yes,' cried Henry and Caroline, catching hold of their hands; 'you must promise to come and see all our gardens and birds.' They said that they would very gladly come, but they must ask their father's leave before they promised. 'You are very right,' said the Curate, 'for a good child ought never to promise to go out without the consent of his parents; but I will call myself on your father, and ask him to give you leave.'

Mrs. Benson had brought a basket of fruit with her to regale her guests with. She now set it before them, and gave, as may be supposed, a sufficient quantity to the civil children. Mrs. Jones, who always had something in her pocket for good children, felt for a little parcel—what could it be, wrapped up in paper? She opened it, and let them see some pretty pictures, very pretty pictures of lions, tigers, and many other animals; she divided them amongst the forester's sons, who at first refused to accept of them; but Mrs. Jones pressed them, saying, 'Take these pictures, good, well-behaved children; one civility deserves another.'

Now came the moment when the company must separate; the separation was painful to them all. When they first met they were civil to each other, because it is right to show

* In true German festal fashion, it was to be on Sunday, and instead of gathering cherries, it was shooting birds.

civility to everybody; but when they became acquainted, they began to love as friends, and wished to have remained longer together. But Mr. Jones had some important business which required his presence, and he was obliged to take leave of the family; he did it in the most affectionate manner; and shaking the Curate's hand, with a look of regard and respect, put five guineas in it for John's use, which the Curate assured him was more than sufficient to pay the surgeon. Mr. Jones then desired him to let him have the rest in his pocket when he returned to his family; and, stepping into the coach, they were soon out of sight, while the Curate and his family turned into the footpath which led to their house.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON the road Mr. Jones was very much amused with observing the plentiful harvest, and the cheerful looks of the reapers. He admired, sometimes, the abundance of ears which grew from a few grains of corn; sometimes the industry of the country people in cutting it down, making it up into sheaves, and carrying it into their barns. He was so charmed with the view, that he could not remain any longer in the coach; he stopped it, and desired the coachman to follow them slowly, after he had handed out his wife and son.

They could now, on foot, observe all the objects far better than when they whirled by them; and they were astonished to see how many men received nourishment from a single field of wheat; and not only men obtained a subsistence from it, but likewise a number of birds, beetles, grasshoppers, and field-mice: this afforded matter for conversation on various subjects.

Charles remarked that the grain did not appear equally fine in all the fields. In some the ears stood thick and strong, like a wood; in others it appeared thin; and, in several, was so mixed with tares, that they could scarcely perceive that any had been sown. Charles could not conceive the reason of it: the fields, thought he, are all the

same soil; the blades grow up near each other, exposed to the same weather, from whence comes this difference? He mentioned to his father this remark, and asked what could be the reason; had we not better inquire of a countryman? most people know something of their own business; and I see one yonder with such an honest countenance as makes me hope that he will readily answer our questions.

They went up to him, bowed, and asked why there was such a great difference in the crops? They added, that they had seen many fields so fruitful that they charmed their eyes, but others almost covered with thistles and tares. 'Yes, yes,' replied the peasant, smiling, 'these were certainly my neighbour Brown's fields; he has always, on his ground, trash, not worth carrying home. But how can it be otherwise? When I and other farmers have been at work some hours, ploughing or hoeing, he is still snoring in bed. When our corn is almost in the ear, he is sowing his seed; and when our after-grass is fit for mowing, he is only bringing home his first loads of hay. There he comes! there he comes! you will soon see, by his dress and gait, what sort of a man he is.'

They turned and saw coming towards them, a horse drawing a cart; but it was such a sorry poor creature, it could scarcely put one foot before the other. Upon him sat Brown, with a tattered coat loosely wrapped round him, and his hat was so old and dirty, that it would not have been easy to guess what colour it had been. His hair was uncombed, and the feathers, which came out of a soft bed, were stuck in it; his face was covered with red blotches, and he sat in such an indolent manner, as if he was scarcely awake or ready to fall asleep. They expressed their surprise, and Charles declared that he should not have believed that there were such idle people in the world, if he had not seen it with his own eyes. 'Yes,' continued the honest countryman, 'the master resembles the fields, the horse the master, the house the horse; the kitchen, sleeping-rooms, dairy, farmyard, and barn, all are alike. He never takes the trouble to drive a single nail; and when a stick lies in his way in the road, he will stumble ten times over it before he

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will stoop to pick it up. But as he makes his bed, so he must lie in it; the fields produce, every year, less and less; the house will fall down, and the horse be unable to drag the crazy cart any longer, and at last he will be obliged to beg. Though he indulges himself thus, he is never content; nay, so long as I have known him, I have never seen him once laugh; and he has convinced me, that an idle man will never be content. Wherever he looks he sees work he has left undone; he sees all his property going to the dogs, which always puts him out of humour; and by sleeping too much and sitting still, his blood grows thick, and his limbs are stiff and heavy; how can such a man be in a good humour? I, for my part, ought to praise work, for I am never so happy as when I have something to do; I have then no dull hours; and when I walk over the ground I have turned up with the sweat of my brow and see my corn waving, my very heart leaps for joy.' 'You are right, my good friend,' said Mr. Jones, 'do not forget this experience; stand firm to your plough, be industrious, and not only a good harvest will be the reward of your labour, but you will have health and cheerfulness while looking forward to it, and doing your duty in the station in which God has placed you.'

Saying so they left him; and the coachman, a second time, telling them that if they went on at this rate they should not get home before midnight, they got into the coach again, he smacked his whip, and away they went full drive.

Charles was sorry when they got into the carriage again, because he could not half so well enjoy the beautiful fields as when they walked. He leaned on the coach door to look as far as his eye could reach; and, as the coach whirled along very quick, it appeared to him as if the sheaves, trees, fields, and villages passed by him; and this sight pleased him.

But his mother called to him; 'Child, child, sit down, lest an accident should happen.' He sat down, but asked 'Why must I sit? When I am seated I cannot see half so well the sweet fields and the other fine things as when I stand

up and lean on the door ; nor can I guess what accident could happen.' 'You must,' said Mr. Jones, 'always obey when I or your mother desire you to do any thing, if you cannot guess why we bid you do it ; for we are older than you, and must know better what will be useful or hurtful to you. As you grow up and acquire more sense, by attending to our instruction, and observing what men do, you will know the nature of things yourself ; and, instead of commanding, I shall reason with you. At present you must trust us when we tell you, that a thing is not good for you. But if you wish to know why your mother refused to let you lean on the door, I will explain it to you, because it is not above your understanding. Observe, that the door shuts with an iron spring only ; but much jolting on a rough road may——' Whilst he was saying so, the carriage passed over a rough stony place, which gave it such a jolt that Charles was thrown forward into his mother's arms ; the door on which he had leaned flew open, and Mr. Jones's cane fell out. The coachman was obliged to stop. Mr. Jones got out, and Charles followed him ; and there lay the beautiful cane snapped in two, the wheel had passed over it. Charles turned pale when he saw it, and all his limbs trembled ; he caught his father's hand. 'O my dear father,' said he, 'from what a dreadful accident has my good mother saved me ! If she had not warned me, or if I had not obeyed her before I knew the reason, I should have fallen out of the coach, and the wheel would have gone over my head, arms, or legs. Yes, dear father, never will I disobey you while I live.' He sprang into the coach, embraced his mother, and promised, with tears in his eyes, never to be disobedient. They were all so affected by this accident, that they sat sometime without speaking a word.

CHAPTER XVII.

THEY might have remained much longer in this state if their silence had not been interrupted by a new and unexpected accident. Mr. Jones observed, as the coach mounted slowly up a hill, a man very shabbily dressed walking before

it. He shook his head and said, 'I know that man, yet cannot now recollect where I have seen him. I hope it is not—no, impossible; it cannot be—he was a very rich man.' The coach now overtook him; the man stopped and made Mr. Jones a humble bow. 'What do I see?' cried Mr. Jones. 'It is him! it is him! stop, Nicholas!

The coachman stopped. Mr. Jones got out of the carriage, and allowed Charles to follow him.

'Are you not,' asked Mr. Jones, 'Mr. Noel,* whom I knew in London about twenty years ago?'

Mr. Noel (sighed). Yes, I am he. And you—I should know you; are you—are you not Mr. Jones?

Mr. Jones. Right, I am he. But, my old friend, you seem to be in a distressed state. Have you been unfortunate? Have you lost your fortune at sea; or has a fire consumed your substance?

Mr. Noel. Alas! no.

Mr. Jones. Have thieves or sharpers plundered you?

Mr. Noel. No; no.

Mr. Jones. Or have you lost all by a lawsuit?

Mr. Noel. Nothing of all this. If I could attribute my misery to any of those causes, I should still find some comfort; but I cannot. I myself am the cause; from myself comes all my misery. Prodigality has made me poor.

Mr. Jones. Prodigality?

Mr. Noel. Yes, prodigality. My father left me forty thousand pounds. I married a wife who brought me twenty thousand pounds; but we neither of us knew how difficult it is to acquire money, and how easy to spend it. We did not believe that it was possible to dissipate such a large fortune, and paid little attention to the expenses of our family, or the management of our house. Every thing that pleased us we purchased. My wife followed every new fashion, and I wore the most extravagant clothes. As soon as a dress was a little out of fashion, or worn by the common people, we gave it away. Our own countrymen could not make furniture to please us, we sent to Paris for a number of useless things. We drank the most costly wines, had the

* Friedrichson.

dearest dainties a few weeks before our neighbours who had more prudence ; went to all the public amusements, and had continually large card-parties at home ; in short, we had a splendid equipage. I had seen a noble pleasure ground belonging to a duke ; the foolish idea of turning my meadows into such an one came into my head. I expended in this manner twenty thousand pounds of the principal, beside the interest of the whole. At the end of five years I remarked that this extravagant way of living could not long last, because I had already wasted more than half my fortune. I mentioned our circumstances to my wife ; but she said that we could not retrench our manner of living without appearing mean in the eyes of all our acquaintance. We had a large estate to expect from a rich uncle, who could not live long ; and when we inherited his fortune, we could very well afford to live in the same way we had done ever since our marriage. I suffered myself to be persuaded ; my expenses always exceeded my income, and most part of the things I purchased were superfluities. Thus did I throw away my fortune and plunge myself in debt, always hoping that my uncle would soon die. He did not die ; and my debts increased every year, till they amounted to such a considerable sum, that when he did die at last, his noble legacy (for on account of my extravagance he left the estate to a distant relation, whom he had a better opinion of) was not sufficient to satisfy my creditors. They now grew importunate, suspicion was roused, and they seized my house, furniture, garden, and clothes ; in short, all I had left. But all was not sufficient to clear me, so I was sent to prison. My wife could not long endure this misery ; for having been accustomed, from her infancy, to live a life of indolent ease, and to follow selfish pleasures, she had not sufficient strength of mind to bear up against poverty ; it appeared so frightful to her that, in a few weeks, grief brought her to her grave. And I, if I had died with her, what misery should I have escaped ? I should not have seen the contempt which my old acquaintance have shown me. Here he sighed bitterly, and his voice was choked by his groans.

Mr. Jones. I pity you ; yet cannot conceive how you could have acted so inconsiderately. When you saw that you exceeded your income one year, why did you not live within bounds the next ? For if you had thought a moment, the consequence must have occurred to you ; you must have foreseen your ruin.

Mr. Noel. You are in the right ; you think like a reasonable man ; but I and my wife were spoilt in our youth. As our parents were rich, we obtained from them all we desired ; yes, more than we desired. We ate every day of a dinner children should never partake ; one course followed another ; we wore the most expensive clothes, and when we wished to pay a visit, two fine horses were harnessed to the coach to carry us in state. Thus from our infancy we lived a foolish life ; and as we had not acquired any useful knowledge, when we grew up we could not turn to more rational pursuits ; we had not strength enough to practise virtue, nor sense to seek for knowledge ; and our slavery to vanity was so great, that we could not deny ourselves anything our weak minds longed for. How happy I should now be if my father had been a day labourer ! I should have been content with homely fare, have thankfully eaten a crust of brown bread, drank small beer, and have made this little journey with pleasure. But, dear Jones, you cannot suppose how woful it is, how hard it is to submit when a man in his youth has pampered his appetite, eaten dainties, drank good wine, and always rode in a coach, to be obliged in his old age to accustom himself to miserable food, and to go miles on foot.

Mr. Jones was affected by this relation, particularly as he saw that he did not attempt to deceive him, but owned his folly. He promised him that he would think of some way to help him ; but requested him, without saying any more, to come into the coach, and sleep that night at his house. Mr. Noel looked steadfastly on him with sorrowful eyes, while a blush rose in his cheeks, and faintly asked if he would not be ashamed to sit by the side of a beggar ?

‘ If you are sincerely sorry for your past life, and intend to begin a new one, I shall never be ashamed of you—God forbid !’

He was now seated in the carriage, and when he had a little recovered himself, recounted many more particulars of his past life and present misery; and earnestly addressing Mr. Jones he said, 'If your children are dear to you, do not let them live a life of idleness and luxury. Men may at any time, when they acquire a fortune, enjoy the pleasures of life, accustom themselves to good cheer, and wear more costly clothes; but it is difficult, yes, very difficult, to bring one's self to relish turnips or cabbages, after pastry and wild fowl; to submit to wear dirty rags, or even coarse clothes, when we have been dressed in fine linen every day.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

BEFORE they had finished this conversation, they reached Bristol. Mary had been a long time watching at the window, waiting for the arrival of her dear parents. Now she discovered the coach; in a moment she was on the steps, and before her parents and brother got into the door, embraced them weeping, and could only bring out 'My father, my mother, my brother.' They kissed her very tenderly; Charles brought her some fruit which the Curate had given him, and she received it with pleasure.

Mr. Jones conducted poor Mr. Noel to a room, and begged him to accept of a coat and some linen, then he returned to his parlour, and said, 'This evening I shall not think of business; I will spend it with my family.'

He afterwards called Mary to him, and began carefully to inquire how she had employed her time during their absence. She then related all; brought down the bonnet which the maid had washed, showed the work that she had done, and the copies she had written; nay, repeated some stories which she had read in such a distinct manner, as proved that she had paid attention to them while she was reading.

The mother examined her work, and asked if she had done it all herself. 'No,' answered she; 'my cousin did the left seam of the shift, while I worked at the right.' 'But,' asked her father, 'have you had no one to visit you?' 'Yes,

Charlotte has been to see me and my three cousins, and I went out to drink tea yesterday with my aunt.'

Mr. Jones. Has anything else happened?

Mary. Be not angry with me, do not frown, I have broken something.'

Mr. Jones. What?

Mary. When my cousins were here, we played at blind-man's buff; and when I was blinded, I ran against the closet, and knocked down one of the best china cups.

Mr. Jones. Indeed you should not have been so giddy; but you show your sense in not concealing or denying it.

During this conversation, Mary's aunt entered, who took care of the house while they were absent. Mrs. Jones inquired how her little charge had behaved, and received a very particular account, which perfectly agreed with the one they had just had from Mary herself.

'Good girl,' said Mr. Jones, 'you might have told us lies; but what purpose would it have answered? We should soon have discovered that you told them, and then we could never again have believed what you said; for when I discover that a child, or a servant, has once told me a lie, I cannot trust or respect them. But you have related everything just as it happened, you have spoken the truth; and now I see that you love truth, I shall in future always believe you.' Then her father and mother kissed her.

While they were expressing the pleasure they felt in finding that they could confide in their daughter, and that she would tell truth, though she exposed her own faults, they were interrupted by the entrance of a stranger. He caught Mr. Jones by the hand with great warmth, and said, 'How glad I am, dear sir, that after so many years I can again shake your friendly hand!' Mr. Jones was not a little surprised by the tenderness and familiarity of a clergyman who was entirely unknown to him. 'I cannot recollect,' said he, 'that I ever had the honour of knowing you.' 'Not me?' said the clergyman laughing. 'Do you not remember little Jack, who used to sit by you at the writing table at school?' 'Yes, I remember him well,' answered Mr. Jones, 'but ———'

‘But you cannot conceive,’ interrupted the clergyman, ‘how the poor son of a tailor should have acquired the appearance of a gentleman?’ ‘To be frank,’ said Mr. Jones, ‘it does surprise me, and I am very desirous to know how it happened—pray be seated, and satisfy my curiosity.’

He seated himself on the sofa, and related with great spirit the singular history of his life. ‘You know,’ said he, ‘that, after my father’s death, my god-father took me home, intending to have me taught a mechanical trade; but, before he could fix on a master, I had been some time in his house. I passed great part of my time in his study. I looked into many books, and when I found one to please me, I read it through with great attention, and often forgot my meals, I was so eager to go on. I used to copy the most striking passages, and repeat them to my god-father. My desire to know what the books contained was so great, that a few Latin words did not frighten me. I took a Latin dictionary, and was at the trouble to hunt after them; and when I could not find them, I asked my god-father. That worthy man finding me one day in his study, shut the door, and asked me if I had a desire to apply myself to learning? I replied that I had indeed a very strong desire, but he knew, my situation, and that, as I was indebted to his bounty for everything, I must be directed by him. Well, said he, I will try you for a twelvemonth, and if you are diligent I will send you to an academy. I do not know what I said, I was so pleased; I assured him that I would willingly go without a coat to learn Latin.

‘He delayed not, but next day engaged a master for me, whom I every day attended. He was a good as well as a learned man, and was so well pleased with my improvement, that he prevailed on my god-father to let me remain under his care till I was old enough to go to college. Before I went I studied day and night. I knew that all my time must be employed to improve my mind, if I wished to become a gentleman. I listened silently to the conversations of old men, was attentive to my master’s instructions, and never began one book before I had finished another. My master had more pupils; I assisted to teach them, and,

when I went to college, he so warmly recommended me, that I had several young men placed under my care, which I was very glad of, because I did not wish to draw more money from my kind god-father than was absolutely necessary. I was respected by the superiors in the college. But not to tire you, from being chosen a fellow, I became a professor,* a doctor of divinity, and, in consequence of some books I published, which were approved of, I obtained a considerable living.'

'So you are then,' asked Mr. Jones, full of astonishment, 'a doctor of divinity, a professor, and have a good living? I now perceive that my opinion is true, for I have always thought that a good understanding was better than riches. I have now in my house a man who once was worth near a hundred thousand pounds, and now he is a beggar. And you, who never had a farthing from your parents, have, through your understanding and industry, acquired a considerable fortune, and the most respectable rank.'

'I am entirely of your opinion,' replied the doctor; 'if in their youth men cultivate their understandings and acquire useful knowledge, they may afterwards acquire a fortune. But if we gained the wealth of the Indies, it would not purchase understanding. And how quickly may a man be deprived of riches! Fire, inundations, wars, thieves, lawsuits, and other misfortunes may in a short time make a rich man poor. But if my house should be reduced to ashes, and all my property destroyed by storms, my cultivated understanding would still remain to comfort me, and enable me to live—that no one can rob me of, without breaking my head.'

CHAPTER XIX.

WHILE Mr. Jones was conversing with the Professor, Mrs. Jones went into the dining parlour to make some inquiries about the supper. She had already given her orders to the cook, and she went now to see how they were executed. She found, however, everything on the table she had ordered, except some preserved cherries. 'Why,' said she to the cook, 'have you not brought the preserved cherries?'

* Hofrath.

'Preserved cherries! preserved cherries! I did not hear you order any,' answered she, with a face as red as scarlet.

Mrs. Jones then desired her to bring them now, and Betty* left the room, but not returning, Mrs. Jones followed her, and asked her why she did not bring the cherries? 'There are no more,' was her answer. 'No more!' said Mrs. Jones; 'last week the jar was half full, for I looked into it, and we have not had any brought to table since.' Betty endeavoured to persuade her mistress that she was mistaken; but as she always made a point of looking over her household matters in a regular manner, she was sure of the fact, and as no one went to the store-room but Betty, she only could have emptied the jar. Mrs. Jones now said, with a firm tone of voice, that she must have stolen the cherries; at last Betty owned she had eaten them.

'But,' said Mrs. Jones, 'how could you be so inconsiderate and greedy, when you want for nothing? You have a part of every thing which comes to our table—why did you take what did not belong to you?' Now Betty began to cry, and said, 'I have been a glutton from my infancy. Whenever I went to my mother's closet, I took an apple or a pear, though she had just given me one; and if she sent me to buy any sweet things, I tasted them before I brought them to her. I became by degrees such a glutton, and so fond of nice things, that I used to eat them all up from my brothers and sisters, who never let me partake of their feasts, because I ate my own cakes alone. This habit has so grown upon me, that when I see any thing nice I cannot help eating it in a corner, and eat till I am sick. I eat so many of those cherries, that nurse thought I should have died with a pain in my stomach: she made me take two or three basins full of nasty camomile tea, and I have hated the sight of preserved cherries ever since. Pray forgive me, dear mistress; while I live I will never do it again.'

'How can I believe,' answered Mrs. Jones, 'that it will not happen again, when you have owned, that though it makes you sick, you cannot conquer this mean, selfish habit. I must have some proof of your amendment before I trust you again. Give me the key of the storeroom, for when I know

* Dorothee.

that a servant is a glutton, I dare not confide any thing to her care.'

Betty entreated to be forgiven, shedding many tears, and hoped that her mistress would not expose her to her fellow-servants; for, if they knew that she was a glutton, they would despise and laugh at her. 'I know very well,' answered Mrs. Jones, 'that gluttony is very disgraceful; but is it my fault that you have acquired such a hateful habit? I have once or twice reproved you gently; now, since you have not listened to me, I must expose you to the family, to see if that will cure you. Nay, the pimples on your face expose your gluttony; we should seldom look ugly, or be obliged to take nasty medicines, if we did not greedily overload our stomachs; and if we forget our duty in private, and cheat our fellow-creatures of their share, it is but just that we should be laughed at in company, and called what we really are, gluttons.'

She was obliged immediately to deliver up the key; and, in future, Mrs. Jones always counted out whatever she gave her.

This disagreeable accident disturbed Mrs. Jones, and she was obliged to stop a moment to smooth her brow before she went to supper, that she might not interrupt the pleasure of the meal, or let her husband or guests see that she had been discomposed by her servant.

She inquired for Mr. Noel, but she was informed that he was ashamed to appear, and wished to sup in his own room. Mr. Jones then went himself to him, and said, 'You have already spent many sad evenings lamenting over your folly, come now and partake of our frugal meal; it will neither remind you of your former abundance, nor your present poverty.'

They now surrounded the table; and Mary, who was with her mother when she reproved Betty, determined not to eat more than her share of the plum pie, lest she should acquire a habit that would expose her to shame and ridicule, beside making her sick and ugly. The Professor related many more remarkable things which had happened to him since he saw Mr. Jones, and they all heard him with attention, particularly Mr. Noel; and when he was informed that

the genteel man before him, who conversed so sensibly, had been a tailor's son, he sighed bitterly at the recollection of his own folly—sighed to think how much money had been thrown away on his education, and how foolish he looked in the presence of a learned man, because he had neglected to acquire knowledge and improve his understanding. 'I see plainly,' said he, 'that those who do nothing but play and amuse themselves in their youth, will never, in their old age, be respected.'

When the Professor was going to take leave of them, he smiled and said, 'But I have not told you all. I am going to be married to a young lady who lives in your neighbourhood. I became acquainted with her when she nursed her father, who was several months confined to his room at Oxford.* I found her a sensible, good girl, who knew how to manage a house, and was not fond of dress; she read to her father, and taught her two younger sisters to read, write, and work. After I found she had an affection for me, I asked her father's consent; he readily gave it, but we were obliged to defer our marriage till I obtained my living. Now I am in possession of it, the day of our marriage is fixed; it is to be three days hence; and, as I wish to rejoice that day, I would gladly have all my friends round me; and you, my first friend, dear Mr. Jones, you whom I loved when we played at ball together, pray come, and your whole family—you must not refuse me.'

That the invitation was agreeable to his wife, a significant smile informed Mr. Jones; so, after wishing his school-fellow joy, he promised to be at the wedding, and they parted very affectionately.

CHAPTER XX.

MRS. JONES was not fond of dress. She always dressed herself and her children in a neat, becoming manner; but was never eager to be the first to adopt a new fashion, nor did she ever wear anything singular or conspicuous. But, when she was obliged to appear in public, or to pay a visit, like

* She spent some months with her parents at Halle.

the present, she thought it decent to conform a little more in her dress to the taste of her acquaintance; and this was not very troublesome, though she seldom paid formal visits, or went to public places, except now and then when she attended some of the public breakfasts at the Hot Wells.

She reflected, the following morning, how she should dress herself and her children. She found that it was not necessary to buy many new things, but soon perceived that those she had required considerable alteration.

On these occasions Mary had always some employment; now she had the muslin to hem which was to flounce her mother's gown. She was very willing to do it, for it was her greatest pleasure to obey and assist her mother; but, when she saw the length of the flounce, and heard that it must be finished by the next day at noon, she shook her head, and said, 'Dear mother, that is impossible; I cannot, in so short a time, do all that.' 'I will tell you,' said the mother, 'how you may do it: you must now only work constantly, and not leave off when you are a little tired, or find it troublesome; and not rise from your seat every moment to run here and there; nay, you must not look about every minute, but pay attention to your work; and, both to-day and to-morrow morning, never quit it when you can possibly help it—and, above all, think of what you are about, and do not begin anything else. Try this plan for an hour or two, and see what you can do; through perseverance we may do many things which we thought impossible.' Mary laughed and said, 'I will see what I can do.'

During this conversation, Mr. Jones was thinking of very different matters. He thought of what he should do effectually to serve Mr. Noel; he reflected some time; and, at last, came to a resolution, and sent for him.

He came with a very humble, sad countenance, and almost trembled; when Mr. Jones called him friend, he glanced his eyes on the clothes he had received from him, and seemed to say, pardon my poverty.

Mr. Jones. Your situation makes me very uneasy; be assured I feel for you; can you think of anything that I can do to help you?

Mr. Noel. Help me! help me!—would to God it were possible; but I see no possibility.

Mr. Jones. Indeed it is impossible for you to live in the expensive manner you did formerly; for if I was to give you my whole fortune, it would only last a few years; and, after that, you would be as poor as you now are.

Mr. Noel. Oh, do not kill me, sir, with remarks on my unpardonable folly! I am racked when I think of my former conduct, and heartily ashamed of it; nay, I cannot believe that I should ever return to my former excesses. I am accustomed to and even content with plain food; and, had I decent clothes of my *own*, I should be quite satisfied with them.

Mr. Jones. If you would be satisfied with receiving a trifle every day, I could afford to allow it you. But could you resolve to live on charity?

Mr. Noel. On charity!—(here his voice faltered, and tears rushed into his eyes)—on charity!—excuse me, sir; what an insult it is! what a bitter mortification for a man who had from his father such a fortune, and has always lived in abundance, to live on charity!

Mr. Jones. I readily believe it; but how else can I help you? Have you a desire to earn a subsistence?

Mr. Noel. Yes, gladly would I work; do anything to avoid living on alms. It is not a shame for an old or a sick man to receive an alms; but I have health and strength: how can I live on charity without rendering myself contemptible? Yet how can I earn a subsistence? I have learned no trade.

Mr. Jones. I have heard you speak French, have you not learned to write and cast accounts?

Mr. Noel. I can do both tolerably; but I could not get a place in London; no one would employ an extravagant gentleman.

Mr. Jones. My friend, now are you still dearer to me than ever you were. You have committed a great fault; but you are an honest man. If you wish to work, live with me. I will daily give you letters to write and copy, and accounts to keep; and allow you, besides your board, fifty pounds a year. Be careful and if you punctually and orderly attend

to business, I will increase your salary; and in time, when you know something of trade, will enable you to be your own master. Yes, if I see that you can be attentive to business, and learn order and economy, I do not despair of seeing you a respectable merchant some years hence.

Mr. Noel. If you would do so, and enable me to earn my own bread, you would, good sir, save my life and honour.

Mr. Jones. Accept of ten guineas, as a token of friendship, to buy you some necessaries till you can earn them. I am not giving an alms, but a pledge of my regard.

Mr. Noel was so touched by this generosity that he could not utter a word; at last big tears rolled down his cheeks, and he exclaimed, 'God bless you and your family! God has sent you to heal a penitent, almost broken heart'—he was going on, calling him his benefactor and preserver; but Mr. Jones went out, saying, 'Compose yourself; I will send your dinner to you; and, at tea, let me see you become one of my family; let me have the pleasure of seeing you grow virtuous and contented.'

Going out he met his wife, who tenderly took his hand, and told him that dinner was ready. He followed her, sat down, ate with a tolerable appetite, but said very little. She was very desirous to know the cause of his silence. She asked him many questions; but his answer did not satisfy her.

After the cloth was taken away, she rose and said, 'I will see if I cannot make you talk.' Saying so, she took a flask of fine wine, which her mother, the day before, had made her a present of. 'Here, my dear, silent husband,' said she, 'here is something to untie your tongue.'

She poured out a glass, he took it with a smile, and tasted it.

'Well,' asked she, 'is it good?'

'Good! very good, my dear,' answered he; 'but I have just tasted something much sweeter than the most costly, exquisite wine—the pleasure arising from benevolence. I have to-day put Mr. Noel to the test, and found him an honest man; and, in consequence of this conviction, I have given him a place in my counting-house, and have promised him

a salary. If he appears to be industrious, faithful, and orderly, I hope in a few years to take him into partnership, or put him in a way to trade for himself. If you had but seen his gratitude; he wept, he prayed God to bless me and my family — my wife, my children;’ saying so, this worthy man embraced his wife and children, and his face was lighted up with love and benevolent pleasure—amongst all our pleasures, the most delightful is that of doing good. ‘This wine,’ continued he, ‘has an agreeable taste in my mouth, it tickles my palate, and, in a few minutes, it will be over; but if I am so fortunate as to save Mr. Noel, if I can take him out of idleness and beggary, and make him an industrious man, who without anxiety may earn a livelihood for himself—this would be a source of joy to me during my whole life. Every time I saw him my heart would whisper me, behold the man thou hast rescued; then should I feel the same pleasure as you feel, when the good girl comes to see you whom you educated when her father and mother left her helpless, without a friend to take care of her.’

‘You are right, my dear husband,’ said Mrs. Jones; ‘let us continue, with part of our fortune, to relieve the miserable, so shall we have delightful recollections in our old age when we cannot enjoy any other pleasure.’

CHAPTER XXI.

THIS conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a young man, whom Mr. Jones had taken on trial into his counting-house, and given different employments to, that he might find out what he had learned, and whether he had made a good use of his time before he came to him. He brought what he had written, an English and French letter, and some bills he had cast up. Mrs. Jones left the room.

Mr. Jones looked over them and shook his head. ‘In what language is this letter written?’ asked he, holding it to him.

‘In French,’ replied the young man.

‘In French,’ continued Mr. Jones; ‘indeed I should not

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have guessed it if you had not told me so ; I cannot understand it ; there is not a line without a fault. And this English letter—look at it yourself ; what false grammar and strange spelling ! Do you call this English ? And the bills are very carelessly cast up ; in this one you have made a mistake of twenty pounds, not to take notice of the blunders in the pence and shillings.’

The young man blushed, and could not bring out a word in his own defence. ‘I pity you,’ added Mr. Jones ; ‘you are an unhappy youth ; I cannot employ you in my counting-house.’ ‘Pray, sir,’ cried the youth, ‘do not send me back ; I will promise to be very attentive, and I still may learn something.’ ‘That you should have done before,’ interrupted Mr. Jones ; ‘you are not come to me to learn French, writing, and accounts ; but to be useful in my business. You can do nothing properly ; I cannot trust you. I must have a youth in my counting-house who has made a better use of his time. No more need be said about it ; pack up your clothes to-day, and to-morrow I will send you home in the stage ; and that you may see that I pity you, I will defray the expenses of your journey.’ The young man would have still continued to entreat, but Mr. Jones went out of the room, saying, as he shut the door, ‘You hear my determination ; it is vain to dispute it ; I know your father sent you to a good school. I cannot keep a clerk who has idly wasted the years of his life best calculated for improvement. If we do not attend to the seed-time we can never expect a harvest.’

The young man stood a moment silent, then walked in an agitation up and down the room, saying, ‘What will my father and mother think of it when I am sent back to them ! they will die of grief ; and all my acquaintance will laugh at me. How much money has been laid out on me, and I know nothing ! Oh that I could call back the years which are past, when I might have learned so much ! but my thoughtlessness and fondness for play has prevented my receiving any benefit from good instruction.’

Meanwhile Mrs. Jones was preparing for the approaching wedding, and she found that she must buy some new ribbons and gloves, and other millinery ornaments. She

then determined to go herself to a chamber milliner, who had been very warmly recommended to her, that no time might be lost. She soon found the house, and knocked at the door of the first landing-place. 'Come in,' cried a horrid voice. She opened the door; but how terribly was she frightened when she saw a man who looked grimly on her, as if he could have killed her. It was Mr. Skinpenny,* whose avarice the whole town talked of; because he only thought of getting money, and often scraped pounds together in a very dishonest manner. Though he had hoarded a sufficient sum to enable him to live at his ease, should he live a hundred years, yet he grudged every farthing he spent; his food was bad, and his dress dirty and old; and so miserable was he that he did not allow himself any of the comforts of life unless other people paid for them. He now sat in a chamber the walls of which were covered with smoke, and the floor was so dirty that no one could have supposed it had been cleaned for two years at least. He wore an old morning gown, the colour of which it was not easy to discover. On the table still stood the remains of his scanty meal, a herring and some mouldy cheese; and near them laid heaps of money, out of which he was choosing the lightest to give to the poor people who came to borrow of him, for he gained his large fortune in this manner, and grew rich by taking advantage of the misfortunes of his fellow-creatures. Mrs. Jones said, with a trembling voice, 'Sir, I beg.'—'What do you beg?' interrupted he; 'I have not a moment's peace during the day—there is no end of beggars. I told you yesterday that I would give you the money if you brought a pledge, but without it you should not have it though you knelt till your knees were sore.'

'What do you mean, sir?' said Mrs. Jones a little angrily. 'Do you take me for a beggar?' and she turned her back to go out. Mr. Skinpenny now recollected her, and was vexed at the mistake. 'Oh, you are Mrs. Jones, the rich merchant's wife; I humbly ask your pardon. I did not at first recollect you. Yesterday a woman tormented me above an hour to lend her twenty pounds; I thought I was speaking

* Harpax.

to her when I said that you should not have it unless you had brought a pledge. Men must take care of what they earn by the sweat of their brow, if they would go through the world like honest people. I am a very poor unhappy man! not a farthing dare I spend on myself; for these three years past I have wished to buy a new morning gown, and have not yet been able to spare so much money. As true as I stand here before you, Madam Jones, last winter I thought my hands and feet would have dropped off—it was so cold, I had no feeling in them, because I was afraid to keep a fire; coals grew so dear during the long frost, there was no telling what they might come to. Yet every creature who comes to see me wants money of me, as if I was made of gold. Believe me, madam, I am a poor miserable man, almost tormented to death, or I should have recollected you, madam.'

'But of what value is all your money,' asked Mrs. Jones, 'if you make no use of it?' 'Ought I not to be careful to provide for my old age? I know not how long God may let me live. We can never tell what accidents may befall us; I may be bedridden for many years, and who will give me anything if I do not take care of myself?' 'But,' continued Mrs. Jones, 'you appear to me to be now a very old man, and to have lived longer than men in general do live.'

'On that very account should I not be very careful lest I should come to want at last? Besides, I have a son and daughter, whom I must pick up something for. But, alas! I have no thanks from them to repay me! They are always plaguing me for money—and why should they come to me, who am an old man? They are strong, cannot they earn their own livelihood? They are old enough to take care of themselves. There is no more affection or duty in the world; I know that they reckon the hours and watch for my death. Miserable wretch that I am! forsaken by all the world, and even my own children do not love me.'

'Have you already given them a sufficient fortune to begin the world with?' asked Mrs. Jones. 'Not a farthing,' replied he, angrily. 'As long as I live I will not give the staff out of my own hands; when I am dead they may take all; but I am not dead yet.'

'If so,' replied Mrs. Jones, 'you ought not to wonder if your children neither love nor respect you, and wish for your death. But can you tell me where I can find Mrs. Sandford?' 'Yes,' said he, smiling, glad to get rid of her, 'she lodges upstairs; you cannot miss your way.'

She then wished him a good morning, and begged his pardon for having disturbed him. Just as she shut the door he asked, in a faint voice, if she would drink a glass of wine? but she curtsied a refusal, and could with difficulty restrain a laugh as she tripped upstairs.

She now saw a very different appearance. She came into a room in which indeed there was no costly furniture, but in every part of it there was a look of cleanliness and order, which refreshed her eyes after the chamber she had just left. At a table sat Mrs. Sandford, and near her two cheerful looking daughters; they were all dressed in a decent manner, and busily employed making hats and caps.

Mrs. Jones was received very civilly, and after she had purchased the things she came for, she requested permission to sit and rest herself a moment, if they would go on with their work. In the course of conversation she admired their industry and taste, and the order she observed in their persons and room. 'Yes,' said Mrs. Sandford, 'a good education was the best fortune I received from my mother, and a good one it proved to be when my money melted away.'

'She must have been a respectable woman,' answered Mrs. Jones.

'Yes, she was indeed a respectable woman,' continued Mrs. Sandford; 'though she was my mother, yet must I praise her now she is in her grave. She had a considerable fortune, above ten thousand pounds; but she always reminded me that prosperity was uncertain: "Fanny, Fanny," she would say, "money is a slippery thing; trust not to your fortune, the largest will waste insensibly away; improve yourself—learn something; if you continue rich, employment will procure you health and content; and should any misfortune deprive you of your inheritance, your abilities and industry will enable you to support yourself without being obliged to anybody." I soon found the use of my hands;

I learned plain work, made my father's shirts and my mother's caps; in short, I learned everything which a woman ought to know who is destined to be a mother and have the care of a family. And I was as gay as a lark. I had time to read, walk, and dance, and seemed to enjoy these pleasures much more than those who sat still and thought of nothing else. I gained, by these means, a strong constitution. When I am sick I always know what ails me; I never am troubled with those nervous complaints, which I really believe idleness produces, for the physicians themselves do not know what to call them. As I was an only child and heir to a good fortune, foolish people did not think it necessary for me to work. Most of my acquaintance who had not fortunes equal to mine spent the whole day dressing or visiting; but I regularly worked and managed the house in the morning, and found time to read and write. Yes, we were all so happy at home that whenever I went to a dance or a play, I longed to return to tell my parents what I had seen. I made baby linen for the poor, and gave them broth and coals; I taught their children to read and work, and the country people used to bless me and say I should never come to want; and, thank God! I never have. But I shall never forget to love my mother, who is now in heaven, for having given me such a good education; but for her I might now have been an idle beggar. She died young, and left me when I was only sixteen to take care of my father's house. Soon after I was of age my father was snatched away; but, before his death, he approved of a husband I had chosen, a respectable merchant. I married him, and endeavoured to make his life comfortable, for I loved him. But though he was very industrious he became a bankrupt: he had ventured my fortune in a very promising scheme; it was all swallowed up; and this want of consideration, he would say, lay nearest his heart. He did not long survive his loss; he fell into a consumption and died. He was cut off in his prime, only six-and-thirty; and I was left behind with these two daughters to maintain and educate without any visible means. I remained here because I hoped, when my husband's affairs were settled, that I should still have something

to receive. I contrived to live till I found that I had only a hundred pounds to expect, which would soon have been consumed if I had not remembered my poor mother's words, "If you should ever be deprived of your fortune, you may subsist by your abilities and industry." I spoke then to my acquaintance, bought a little stock, and became a milliner. As I wished to attend to the education of my daughters, I did not choose to keep an open shop. An old milliner, whom I had formerly assisted, recommended her customers to me when she left off trade; besides, she gave me some instruction respecting the management of my business. Since that I have had more work offered to me than I could do. I have never known want; I have given my children a proper education—good girls! they now assist me, and are the comfort of my declining years. I have no care; when I am dead they can maintain themselves. I am content—nay, happier, excepting the loss of my husband, than when I was mistress of a large fortune. My money is gone; but the industry my mother taught me remains with me still, and supports me and my children.'

Mrs. Jones rejoiced at having met with such a sensible good woman, and determined to solicit her acquaintance in her favour. She admired the industry of her modest daughters, and addressing them in a most friendly manner, she assured them, that they would never know want or care while they followed such an excellent mother's example. She requested Mrs. Sandford to visit her frequently, and allow the young people, when they had done their work, to come and walk with her and her children. 'Indeed, my dear madam,' added she, 'I wish to become intimate with you, and improve by your instructive conversation. I shall find more pleasure in your company, nay, think myself more honoured by your visits, than I should ever feel from the notice of a lady of quality, only distinguished by her rank and fortune.'

This conversation was interrupted by a gentle tap at the door. 'Come in,' said Mrs. Sandford. The door was opened, and a poor woman entered, whose whole appearance spoke her misery.

‘Have pity on me! have pity on me!’ said she, ‘I am a poor unfortunate woman. I have never in my life before had occasion to ask charity of any one; but now — now necessity impels me to pray you to have compassion on me. My husband, who is a tailor, has by his industry supported me and my children, in a decent manner, for many years. But he has now been sick above a month, and unable to earn a farthing; nor can I, for I must nurse him day and night. I have six young children who cry all day for bread; and the poor sick man requires nourishment and medicines, while I stand by and cannot help him. I am just come from a man who lodges in the room under this; what a hard-hearted man! I did not think that there were such cruel people on God’s earth. He gave me nothing, though heaps of gold lay on the table; he even called me names; he called me an idle wicked woman, and said that I had spent all my money in drams; what cutting words! It is hard enough to suffer want; but when our fellow-creatures shut their hearts against us, or reproach us for our misery, it becomes unbearable.’

‘Why,’ asked Mrs. Jones, a little angrily, ‘did you not come to me, and make known your situation? Your husband has long worked for us, and I always thought him an honest, industrious man; and such people ought never to suffer want. If, sometimes, through sickness or other unavoidable accidents, they happen to be in trouble, every good man should be ready to support them. From this time, good woman, come every day to my house, and I will give you what is sufficient to feed your family, and the nourishing things your husband requires; and here is something to supply your present pressing wants.’ She put half a guinea into her hand, and Mrs. Sandford gave her half a crown; nay, the girls gave her sixpence a piece out of their little savings.

The woman was transported with joy. ‘Am I,’ said she, ‘amongst angels? Yes, now I see that there are still good people on the earth! How I shall rejoice the heart of my husband, and quiet my children when I return home! God for ever bless you all, and give you back, a thousand fold,

what you have bestowed on me. May he pour the same peace into your bosoms I now feel!’ She lifted up her eyes to heaven, and hurried out of the room, leaving them all with tears in their eyes.

Mrs. Jones was now obliged to hasten home, after she had once more renewed her assurance of friendship; and added, that she was very glad that she happened to hear of her, because she had not only become acquainted with a worthy woman, but had had an opportunity of affording comfort to several people in distress.

CHAPTER XXII.

WHEN Mrs. Jones returned home, she found a stranger there, who came from Bath to be present at the approaching wedding. He was the curate of a little neighbouring village, and an usher at an academy. He was just going to take leave when Mrs. Jones entered, because, he said, that he had some business to settle that afternoon. Mr. Jones did not then attempt to detain him, but pressed him so warmly to spend a few hours at his house, before he left Bristol, that he promised to come and sup with them if he could finish his business.

When he was gone, Mary asked, in a ridiculing tone, ‘Why, dear father, did you press so much a man who looked so mean and simple, that I should be afraid to stay in a room alone with him. I never saw such a strange-looking man; he turns his toes in, his shoulders are up to his ears, he makes mouths when he is not speaking; and then, what an old-fashioned coat he has on; he looks like a ploughman.’

‘Mary, Mary,’ answered Mr. Jones, ‘be not so precipitate in your judgment! This man, though he was neglected in his youth, and acquired habits which make him look very awkward, may, notwithstanding, be a very wise and good man. If you had been neglected, you would now probably have a number of awkward tricks, and it would be cruel to laugh at, or despise you for them. You have a mother who sets you a good example, who watches you, so that you

have not had time to acquire bad habits ; besides, you have learned to dance, and been in well-bred company. But, probably, this gentleman had none of these advantages ; perhaps he had a father who could not afford to spend much on his education ; perhaps he spent his youth in study, without having any opportunity of mixing with the world ; and, at present, I believe he has so much to do in his school, that he has no time to think of his appearance.' Mary still did not like him ; and said, 'Can such a man be wise ? Can he do much good ?'

Mr. Jones was going to answer, and reprove her for her folly, when Mr. Noel entered the room, and interrupted the conversation. He was beginning again to thank Mr. Jones for his kindness ; but he interrupted him, saying, 'Speak no more of it, dear sir: the best way you can thank me, and all that I expect from you, is this, that you will exert yourself to become an orderly, industrious man ; or all I have done, and mean to do, for you will be useless ; and I shall be disappointed.' Mr. Noel assured him that he intended to exert all his powers to become what he wished him to be. He then requested Mr. Jones to look at what he had done that day, and freely give his opinion. He had written several French and English letters, and cast up some accounts. Mr. Jones looked them over, and found them written with more care than he expected, and the accounts were perfectly right. 'If you continue to be so attentive, I shall expect to see you a rich man,' said Mr. Jones, smiling ; 'and, in spite of fate, you will become respectable ; for that depends on your conduct, and not on your success.' Mr. Noel said, that he felt a little tired, not having been accustomed to work ; but, from the pleasure he experienced, and the secret satisfaction he had seldom tasted at the close of an idle day, he really believed he should be, in future, happier living an active life, than when he enjoyed all the superfluities this world could afford, and only thought of seeking for amusement. 'Alas ! sir,' continued he, 'I have discovered that no man can enjoy pleasure who does not fulfil some duty, and pursue some useful object regularly every day. We cannot be idle without being wicked.'

Now the Usher returned ; his entrance seemed to disconcert Mr. Noel, and he remained silent some minutes, staring at him. At last he said, 'Pardon me, sir, is not your name Goodman?' 'Yes,' answered he; 'but where have I had the pleasure of knowing you?' 'Were you not once tutor to the son of a Mr. Noel, of Yorkshire?' 'Yes,' replied Mr. Goodman, 'and I should have made something of that child if he had not been an only son; but his mother was soo foolishly indulgent, that she never let him study half an hour together, lest it should make him sick.' Mr. Noel then started up and caught his hand, saying, 'Best of men, my benefactor, do you forget little James, whom you formerly instructed? I am he! You are my preserver, my more than father—all my comforts must I ascribe to you—you are——' He was interrupted by a servant who came to tell his master that supper was on the table.

During supper time, Mr. Noel could speak of nothing but the good instruction he had, in his youth, received from Mr. Goodman. 'I remember very well,' said he, 'how good, how kind you were to me. How many times you desired me to be diligent, and not waste all the precious hours of youth in idleness. You always represented to me, that a man who learned nothing in his youth would ever be contemptible and unhappy; if I had followed my own inclinations, I should have done nothing but play. When you came and took me from my amusements to receive my lessons, I was often so angry with you, that I wished you a hundred miles off. But you had patience with me, and continued to remind me that I should be a very ignorant gentleman, if I did not at least learn writing, arithmetic, and to speak French. You sometimes punished me when I neglected my lessons, and I then thought you a very cruel man; but now, dear sir, now I see clearly, that no man in the world has been of the use to me that you have. Let me tell you, in a few words, my situation. My whole fortune is spent, and my wife's with it; besides, I was heir to a rich uncle; but it is all gone, melted away by extravagance; I am stripped of every thing; only what I learned from you remains. I can write, cast up a bill, and speak French.

Yes, I still can do what you taught me; and these acquisitions procure me bread. My benefactor, I thank you for this; I thank you for every hour's instruction I received, for your advice, and the punishments you made me undergo.'

Mr. Goodman was very much affected by this discourse. He said, 'It gives me the truest pleasure to find that I have contributed to the happiness of a fellow-creature.'

'The best reward we schoolmasters can receive for all our trouble is, that we sometimes are so happy as to live to see the good we have done. The business of education is very laborious. Children are, in general, very indolent and thoughtless, and give us, through their cunning and perverseness, much trouble; and they often have so little judgment that they think us cruel when we oblige them to learn their lessons, that they may not grow up in a state of ignorance, and be unable to take care of themselves when they ought to be able to take care of their children. And, for all our trouble, we seldom receive sufficient to maintain our families and lay by something for our old age. When in these circumstances, our clothes are shabby; for, in such cases, a man has not that time to think of dress which people may spare who have nothing else to do, and live in abundance. If, I say, he acquires some awkward habits, from study or vexation, people are so unjust as to ridicule him—nay, despise him, because he has not the manners of a fine gentleman who only thinks of amusing himself. Indeed, Mr. Noel, if we had not sometimes the pleasure to see that we have done good our situation would be a very disagreeable one.'

Mary could no longer restrain her tears; she rose from the table and hid herself behind the window curtain that the company might not see her weep. Her father went to her and inquired in a whisper what was the cause of her tears. 'I am ashamed of myself,' said she; 'I have done wrong, I have ridiculed this good man; he is a sensible man, has done a great deal of good, and has had many things to vex him. If I did but know how I could make an excuse for my folly, I would try to forget that I had been such a fool; but I

will never again laugh at an old man because he has on a shabby coat.'

Her father tried to compose her, and persuaded her to return to her seat, after he had seriously desired her not to be in future so hasty in forming an opinion. He added that 'the most useful people sometimes neglected their dress, and have in the eyes of children and ignorant persons an awkward appearance. And many who, like officers, have fine coats on, and have an easy manner of speaking and bowing, are very foolish and wicked people. Above all, we ought never to laugh at bodily deformity or poverty, because persons so afflicted have often more good qualities than rich and handsome people, who have not had misfortunes to teach them how to improve their understandings and love their miserable fellow-creatures. Besides, if you had acquired more discernment you would have discovered in this gentleman's face so much sense and goodness that you would have loved and not have ridiculed him.'

Mary now returned to the table, and sideling in a bashful way to Mr. Goodman's chair, took his hand and looked at him sorrowfully, as much as to say, 'I am very sorry that I ridiculed such a wise and useful man.' He kissed her, called her a good girl, and she began to smile again through her tears.

The company then rose, after the conversation had turned on the many difficulties teachers have to overcome who wish to improve their pupils, and that children, instead of playing them tricks and laughing at their appearance, ought to try to please them and render their task easier. A foolish child laughs at everything it does not understand; a good one never forgets that it must live many years in the world before it can distinguish right from wrong.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE next morning they had a very cheerful breakfast, but no one in company was so gay as Mary. She stood smiling at the back of her mother's chair, stealing a look at her father as she drank her milk, with eyes sparkling with joy. 'Mary,'

said he, 'you have certainly been very good, because you look so happy.' 'Perhaps I have,' answered she, and stepping softly into the next room, soon returned with her work-basket full of the muslin her mother gave her to hem the day before. She put it on the table and said, 'You were very right, dear mother, through perseverance we may do many things which we thought impossible. Look, look, here are the flounces which you yesterday gave me to hem. I did not think that I should ever have got to the end; but, through perseverance and attention, I have made it possible. Is it not true? If I had got up from my seat every moment, had I played or looked out of the window, I should not have finished half my task. But I did not do so; I minded what you said, mother; I never left my seat but when I could not help it. I heard once a Frenchman in the street, with dancing dogs; I must own that I did wish to see them, yet I did not stir. My brother came twice to ask me to come and play with him; but I fixed my eyes on my work, thinking how surprised you would all be to see it done at breakfast-time. Yes, dear mother, I am glad I did as you bid me.'

Mrs. Jones kissed her, and gave her the praise she had earned by her industry. 'Enjoy this praise, my child,' said she; 'it is sweet; it is entirely your own. You have deserved it for practising self-denial, and doing more than was expected from you; but when you are praised on account of your clothes, you ought not to feel pleasure, because a wooden doll, without a mind, and which cannot think, may look well in fine clothes.'

'Yes,' continued Mary, 'I am very glad that it is done, that I conquered myself. If I had now much to do, I should be very uneasy; and think if it was but done! if it was but done! I should have nothing to care for; for if I had not finished it, I should have been so vexed; and now here it is all hemmed. I am so glad! and as often as I see your gown, I shall feel new joy. I shall always remember in future, when I have anything to do, not to begin any other work till I have finished what I am about.'

Mr. Jones was equally pleased with Mary's conduct, and

advised his children to be very attentive to their work and lessons, and not to allow themselves to be tired when they sometimes found them difficult. If they followed this advice, he assured them that they would have many happy hours in every situation in life. When we think of our work, that we still have much to do, we are often a little discouraged ; but when it is finished, we shall feel the pleasure Mary now feels.

The children listened attentively to their father's advice, and the family separated to fulfil the duties of the day. Mary went with her mother to hear her give orders to the servants, and regulate her household matters. And she did not forget the poor tailor and his family. She tasted the sago which she intended to send to him, and put the wine into it herself ; ' for,' said she to Mary, ' it is my duty to see, that what I give to a poor sick man is good ; but when a rich man dines with us I am not so anxious, because he has a good dinner every day at home.' Mr. Jones went into his counting-house, and Charles to his master.

He had already waited for him a few minutes in the summer-house, where he daily instructed him and two other children.

This judicious master had established a custom among his little scholars, that they should write down and show to him, what appeared most remarkable to them in the lessons they had received the day before. By this method he not only gave them an opportunity to repeat what they had learned, but he quickly perceived who had been attentive or thoughtless.

Little James was first desired to show what he had written, and it was done so orderly that the master was very well satisfied with it. He had, the day before, pointed out to his scholars many different kinds of insects, and had shown them in how many respects they were useful. All this James had retained and set down. He mentioned the different kinds of food instinct led those little creatures to seek for ; their remarkable transformations or changes from one form to another ; their retreat in the winter ; how many little birds lived on them ; and what use they were of to man.

When he had finished his recital, the master expressed how well pleased he was with him : ' I see very clearly,' said he, ' that you have really been instructed by my conversation, and that you thought on what you were about when you wrote down the parts you recollected, because they engaged your attention. You have been attentive. Still continue to exercise your attention ; always turn your thoughts to your employment, to whatever you apply to, and on the pleasures you enjoy.

' When you walk in a garden, for example, turn your thoughts on the objects about you ; on the trees, flowers, and herbs which grow near you ; on the buds, butterflies, and bees that fly around you ; in short, on everything which passes before you. Do this with attention, and you will probably become a great man. Every day you will learn something more, grow wiser, and all your undertakings will succeed like this exercise. Pleasure will flow in on you from every side ; for you will then remark and feel all that is agreeable or beautiful in whatever you taste, in every flower which you see, and in every bird you hear sing.'

The master then took a red book out of his pocket, in which he had a custom of setting down what he remarked of his scholars, and behold what he wrote : ' The thirtieth day of August has James, by writing a good exercise, given a very strong proof of his attention.'

Then James smiled ; he was happy to think that his father would hear of his attention, and he felt satisfied with himself.

Now Charles brought his exercise, but it was not done half so well. He had not only left out many of his tutor's observations, but also written down many things very wrongly. Respecting the may-bug, for instance, he had set down that it lays its eggs on trees ; and of the spider, that it was, during some time, in the state of a nymph (a chrysalis).

The master was very angry at this, and said, ' You have certainly been very giddy. You have neither paid attention to my instruction, nor to your exercise ; but you have had something else in your head. Is it not true ? Have I not guessed it ? Own it ; what were you thinking of ?'

Charles, ashamed of himself, cast his eyes on the ground and said, 'I am to go to-morrow to a wedding, and the wedding has never been out of my head ever since I heard I was to go. I have been continually thinking what pleasure I should have; what company I should meet; and how I should play and dance there.'

'I believe you,' said the master. 'Now, dear Charles, try quickly to cure yourself of this fault of inattention, and let not your thoughts flutter round imaginary pictures of past or future pleasures, else you will be good for nothing. You will learn very little; and, in all your undertakings, you will be unsuccessful, just as in this exercise; you will not even be in a state to enjoy pleasure. You will eat and drink, and not taste how refreshing it is; you will walk through gardens, fields, and woods, and not perceive their beauties, if you do not turn your thoughts to them. Poor Charles!'

Charles lifted up his sorrowful eyes, and was ashamed to look him in the face.

'Am I not right?' said the master.

'Yes, indeed,' replied Charles; 'yesterday I could do nothing. I began to play on my little fiddle, but no sound could I bring out, my thoughts were far off. So full was I of the wedding, that I swallowed my dinner without chewing my meat, and scarcely tasted what I ate.'

'Indeed,' continued the master, 'this bad habit is become very strong. I must set it down, that I may observe it, and try if I can cure you of it. For it is absolutely necessary that you should correct this fault, if you ever expect to become a sensible man. An inattentive man will never make a proficiency in anything.'

Charles looked sorrowfully at his master, as if he would say, 'Pray, sir, forgive me only this time, and it shall never happen again.'

But the master did not suffer himself to be moved by his entreaties; he took out the black book, in which he always set down the faults of his scholars, and wrote in it: 'The thirtieth of August has Charles, by writing a very bad exercise, given a proof that he is very inattentive.'

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This vexed Charles, for the black book, as well as the red one, was every week examined by his father.

Now came the turn of the other scholar, William;* but he had not done his exercise. When he was asked why he had been so negligent, he said, as an excuse, that his father and mother had gone, the evening before, a long walk into the country, and taken him with them, so that he had not had time to finish his exercise.

‘That is certainly a lie,’ interrupted the master.

‘No, indeed,’ said William, and wept bitterly. ‘You may ask my father himself, if you will not believe me.’

‘It is very probable,’ continued the master, ‘that you took a walk with your father. If James† or Charles had said so, I should have believed them without further thought, because I know that they always speak the truth. But how dare you expect that I shall believe you, when I have detected you in so many lies? Only last week you told me that you could not finish your exercise because you had been obliged to do something for your father. I inquired of him, and found that it was an untruth. Since I know that you are a liar, how can I depend on what you say? We cannot easily believe him whom we have once detected in a lie.’

The black book was then taken out again, and though William declared, with tears in his eyes, that now indeed he had told the truth, his master would set down: ‘The thirtieth of August, William did not bring his exercise, and, to excuse himself, he said that he went to take a walk with his father; but I cannot believe him, because I know that he is a liar.’ ‘If, during three months,’ continued the master, ‘I do not again catch you in a lie, I will believe that you attend to truth and trust you.’

The lessons being over, the boys were allowed to amuse themselves in the garden. Charles took his playmates to the little bed his father had given to him and showed them the flowers and vegetables he had planted himself. He began then to gather the ripe seed, which he put into a paper bag; in short, to pluck up the weeds, and do whatever else was necessary to be done, and his playfellows helped him.

* Karl.

† Erich.

When they were a little tired they rambled about the garden, and gratified themselves with the sight of the various plants which grew there.

Now the clock struck one.* It was the hour when Mr. Jones usually dined, and all his family were obliged to be punctual and come immediately to table. Charles told James that they must now part, and he looked for William to tell him that it was time to go home; but he could not find him anywhere. They both called out as loud as they could, 'William! William!' but no William could they hear or see. They could then only suppose that he was already gone, and they left the garden, shutting the door after them. James went home and Charles to dinner.

But William was not gone home. He had hid himself in a thick arbour to play his schoolfellows a trick; he imagined that they would be uneasy, and not leave the garden till they had found him. But when he no longer heard their voices he began to be afraid that they might leave him behind. He came out of his hiding-place, sought all round for his playmates, but none could he find. He screamed out, 'James! Charles!' and no one answered him. He ran to the garden door and found it shut. Now he grew uneasy. He called out, in a sorrowful tone, sometimes 'James!' then 'Charles!' 'Mr. Jones!' and all the rest of the names he could recollect he repeated them, without stopping to take breath. But how could they hear him? they were all at dinner or preparing for it.

As he could neither open the door, climb over it, nor make himself heard, the best thing he could have done was to have waited quietly till some one passed by. But he did not do so; he was impatient; and though it was entirely owing to himself that he was shut in, yet he looked all round to see if he could perceive any living creature to vent his spleen on. As he saw nothing, he turned all his anger against the garden door, which could not offend him or feel his blows. He kicked against it with all his force, and he would certainly have split the door if the panels had not been very thick. Twenty times had he kicked against the

* Twelve.

door without making any impression on it. At last he grew quite furious, bit his lips, collected all his strength, and kicked again. But, oh!—what now—his foot stuck to the door, and he roared out with pain. He had kicked against it with such violence that a great nail, which stuck out, had run almost through his foot. There hung the impatient boy, unable to draw his foot back; he tried once or twice, but screamed out through pain when he attempted it, and gnashed his teeth through rage. The blood ran out of his shoe, and the whole weight of his body rested on one foot, the other was nailed to the door.

In this dreadful situation he remained a quarter of an hour. He turned pale, his legs and all his limbs trembled, and he would certainly have fainted, if by the greatest good luck one of the maids had not passed by the garden. He then cried out in agony, 'Oh, help me!'

The girl, who was terrified by the sound of his voice, ran quickly to the house to search for the key, and opened the door hastily. By so doing, indeed, the nail was torn out of his foot; but the wrenching of it out caused such violent pain that he actually fainted and sunk senseless on the ground. The girl ran terrified to her master to tell him that William lay half dead in the garden. Then Mr. Jones and his whole family hastened to him.

The sad sight instantly filled them all with compassion, and Mr. Jones sent directly for a surgeon.

While they waited for him Mr. Jones inquired how he had received this terrible wound; and hearing that he brought it on himself, gave him a very forcible warning. 'My son,' said he, 'thy sufferings are the consequence of thy impatience. When anything disagreeable happens to us we should guard against anger, and rather try to compose ourselves that we may think of a remedy, than give way to passion: if we cannot find one, we must wait patiently till circumstances alter. Through impatience we always make things worse. If you had waited quietly till some one came by the garden, you might have begged them to release you out of your prison, in which you had not been long confined, and then you would not have hurt your foot. Now the surgeon came and bound up the wound, and shrugging up

his shoulders said, 'This little impatient boy will be confined a fortnight or three weeks at least.'

'Three weeks!' said William; 'what a foolish creature I have been! I wished not to remain a quarter of an hour in the garden; now must I be shut up three weeks or more in my room, suffering great pain.'

The thing was done and could not be recalled. He was carried home and forced to sit a month in his room with his leg up, suffering great pain, because the nail was rusty which he drove into his foot, and the wound did not readily heal. While his playmates were enjoying themselves in the garden, he was obliged to have the wound dressed and have some powder applied to it. 'Oh! the powder made it burn like fire.'

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE greatest part of the following morning was employed in dressing Mary like a doll. At first they put her on a pair of stiff stays, and, as she had never worn stays with bones in them before, she seemed in fetters and could hardly draw her breath. Then the hairdresser came; he put her hair in papers, which used to flow in natural locks on her neck and shoulders, twisted them very hard, and pinched them with hot irons. Poor Mary trembled, because she expected every moment that the hot irons would touch her forehead or cheeks. Every moment she asked if it would not soon be done? but he begged her to have patience, and after curling and frizzing her hair above half an hour, he bid her look in the glass, and she saw a little face peeping out of a curled wig. She had then a silk slip laced tight to her shape, and over it a long gauze dress so stuck out with trimmings and artificial flowers that she could scarcely move, she was so encumbered with finery.

All this being over, and Mr. and Mrs. Jones dressed with more care than usual, out of respect to the Professor, and that they might appear with propriety in a company where everyone tried to outshine his neighbour by the richness and taste displayed in their clothes and ornaments, they stepped into a coach, and drove in state to the wedding.

There they found a large company, amounting at least to forty persons, all dressed in the most superb manner. Even Mr. Goodman had a new wig on, and a coat he only wore on particular occasions. The whole company waited for the arrival of the Professor and his bride, who were gone to promise before the altar to love, support, and take care of each other in sickness and health. Now they entered, the Professor led his bride, and they both seemed to rejoice that they had found a friend with whom they could divide the sorrows and pleasures of life, and all the visitors rejoiced with them, and wished that they might through a long life enjoy their happiness. The Professor left the room, but soon returned, leading in an old grey-headed man, in whose countenance, though full of wrinkles, there appeared more cheerfulness than could have been expected, considering his advanced age.

'Behold my father,' said he to the company, bowing respectfully. 'The father who gave me life I cannot present to you; for he has been a long time in his grave; but this generous man has, ever since his death, taken his place, and educated me with all the care and affection of a father. He not only (here the tears ran down his cheeks) procured me food and clothing, but he took care to have me instructed. My fortune, my rank, my dear wife, all, all, I owe to the goodness of this excellent man. He was so affected that he could not say more; he silently pressed the respectable old man's hand, unable to utter another word.

The bride approached, and taking from her husband the hand which he held, she kissed it, saying, 'Worthy man, from your hands I received my husband.'

The whole company was affected, particularly when the Professor addressed them, saying, 'My friends, if to-day you enjoy any pleasure in seeing a fellow-creature happy, you must ascribe it all to my benefactor.'

This benefactor was his godfather, whom he had before mentioned to Mr. Jones. He was affected in his turn, and after wiping away a tear which flowed down his venerable cheeks, he said, 'I have not done more than any honest man would have done in my place. But it gladdens my old

age ; I rejoice that I have lived to see a man happy, whom I contributed in some measure to make good.'

His knees shook, and he looked round for a chair on which he could sit. The Professor instantly observed it, and taking him by the hand into another room, he conducted him to a sofa, and sat down by him. 'Pardon me, my father,' said he, 'for openly proclaiming your benevolence. I know that you seek to hide the good which you do from all the world ; but my heart was full ; I felt so forcibly that I owed all my happiness to you, that I could not remain silent. O my second father, I have only testified my gratitude by words, can I do anything to give you a substantial proof that I have not forgotten what you have done for me ? Can I give you a proof of my gratitude ?' The good old man sighed, but did not speak.

'Dearest sir,' continued the Professor, 'if I can serve you in any respect, give me but a hint, and I will fly to obey you. Only procure me the pleasure this happy day of proving that I am grateful.'

'I want nothing,' replied the old man. 'I have only a short time to live. But my relation, Mr. Goodman, has a large family ; the income he receives for being usher of a grammar-school is small, yet he has taken care to educate his children in the best manner. His eldest son ought to go to the university next year ; but how is the poor man to maintain him there ? If you could get him placed there on the foundation ——'

'Say no more,' interrupted the Professor, holding out his hand ; 'I promise to take charge of him, he shall go with me to Oxford, and I will take the same care of him as if he was my own son.'

The old man was just beginning to express the pleasure this promise gave him, when Mr. Jones entered the room. He respectfully and cordially shook the Professor by the hand, saying, 'Worthy man, I pray you allow me to call you friend ! I have already felt a sincere esteem for your talents and learning ; but now it is increased to veneration, now I perceive that in your prosperity you remember the benefits you received in a state of poverty. Gratitude exalts a man much higher than learning !'

The Professor then conducted his two guests to the table, where the rest of the company waited for them. It was covered with the most costly dainties; but how tasteless were the nicest bits, compared with the pleasure he had received from the conversation with his benefactor.

After some hours the company rose from table, to shake off by a little motion the fatigue of sitting so long. They divided into parties in the drawing-room, everyone choosing the companion he wished to chat and laugh with.

The children soon collected together, and they all agreed to go into the garden to amuse themselves. There were ten whom the Professor had invited with their parents. They were all oppressed by the warmth of a close room, in which they had been confined above two hours, scarcely able to breathe, and sighing for fresh air like fish out of water.

Now they ran downstairs into the garden, and talked of all kinds of plays. The boys proposed a race, and as there were more boys than girls, they agreed to run. But it was not very agreeable to Mary; her hair, her stays, and gauze dress all prevented her getting foremost in the course. She had scarcely set off when her breath failed, and she got such a stitch in her side that she was obliged to stop to recover her breath. She made a second attempt, and exerted all her strength to overtake her playfellows; but a rosebush caught one of her flounces and tore it. She disengaged herself, and advanced a third time, but a bough got entangled in her curls, and discomposed her headdress. Most of the other girls shared the same fate, for they were all loaded with ornaments.

These accidents made Mary look foolish; the boys began to laugh at the little woman, and she wished her finery a hundred miles off. To avoid their ridicule, she turned down a walk by herself to gather a nosegay for her mother. She saw on all sides beautiful flowers, and bent forward to pluck them; but that she could not do without much trouble, because her stiff stays hurt her when she attempted to stoop.

Full of vexation she slipped from the party to seek for her mother. She met her just entering the garden, and requested her to put her hair in order, and hide the rent she

had made in her gown, that the boys might not laugh at her. 'Shall we not soon go home,' asked she.

'We shall probably remain here five or six hours more, before we think of taking leave of our civil friends. But why do you wish to go home so soon? you have here company and amusement.'

'And of what use is all that,' said Mary, 'when I cannot enjoy anything? If I had on my cotton jacket and straw hat, then I should be merry, I should run and skip; but in this dress I am bound like a prisoner. Sometimes my hair tickles me, my feathers and flowers keep my head stiff, and my stays continually hurt me. When I begin to play my flounces or flowers are in my way, and every tree catches my frock. Nay, the boys tread on my train on purpose to see me look foolish. Pray, dear mother, go home soon, that I may get rid of this disagreeable dress!'

'Poor girl,' answered Mrs. Jones, 'I pity you. I know very well that a long train, stays with bones in them, and tangled hair, are very inconvenient, and that you cannot be as easy and gay as you wish. For that reason I have not till now teased you with such useless parts of dress. A good girl requires no ornaments. If she keeps her person clean, and puts her clothes on in an orderly manner, people will only look at her good-humoured obliging face. But to-day you even wished to be dressed, and I had a mind to let you feel how much more comfortable you would have been in your muslin frock and pink sash. Try now to compose yourself; to-morrow at this time all will be over! I will comb out your hair, and let you have your little jacket and straw hat.'

'Oh, if to-morrow was but come!' continued Mary.

'But wishing will not bring it a moment sooner,' interrupted Mrs. Jones. 'Be patient, go and join your companions, and take care not to appear out of humour, lest you should disturb their pleasures, which will not ease you though you may tease them. Only complain to your friends of vexations which they cannot remedy; playfellows are not to be put out of their way by the inconveniences you suffer.'

Mary promised to govern her temper, and forced herself to look as cheerful as she could with a pain in her head and side.

She went up to Leonora,* a rich baronet's daughter, and taking her good-naturedly by the arm, she said, 'Come, Leonora, let us take a walk round the garden; the race does not suit well with our fine holiday dresses.'

But Leonora was very proud, and drew her arm hastily back, saying, 'Pray, Miss Jones, take care, or you will rumple the lace on my sleeves.' She then drew up her head, bridled her chin, and turned up her nose, as much as to say, 'a tradesman's daughter like you ought not to be so familiar with me. The lace on my dress is very rich, and the flowers, the finest that have lately come from France,' continued she; 'my mother purchased them that I might have something to distinguish me when I was forced to mix with nobody knows who. For I am a young lady of a good family, and it is insupportable to see citizens' daughters imitate in everything people of condition, said the lady who so often visits my mother, Lady Upstart. I had these paste buckles lately sent home; they were bought of the Prince of Wales's jeweller. What pedlar set yours? I never saw anything so vulgar. I put mine on for the first time when I sung at a private concert before the Prince. For you must know that I am allowed to sing charmingly. Lord Smoothtongue,† who dined at our house the other day, said that I had a fine angelic Italian voice. He spoke in French to me too for half an hour, and declared that I prattled like a native of France. I shall soon begin to learn Italian; it is not very difficult; but nothing indeed is difficult to me; I shall be able to speak it in six months.' Thus did she run on, till poor Mary was quite weary of her foolish pride and chat, and longed to leave her to enjoy her vain thoughts alone. She looked anxiously round for an opportunity, and saw a young lady coming whom she had been in company with before. She instantly left Leonora, and joined Charlotte, saying, 'Will you take a walk with me, for this is a sweet garden?' 'With

* Brigittchen, and her father was a Rathsherr.

† Graf Rheinfeld, who said it was an angel voice; but Lady Upstart does not appear in the German, and the Prince is a vague German one.

all my heart,' answered she; and they turned down another walk, and left Leonora with her fine lace and paste buckles to count her steps, and look in vain at the trees for admiration.

'How came you to walk with that proud Miss Leonora?' asked Charlotte.

'By chance,' said Mary; 'but, believe me, I was very glad to leave her. She has been talking as if she alone was wise, and all the rest of the world fools.' 'Yes, yes,' replied Charlotte, laughing, 'she has often spoken to me in the same style. I have known her a long time. She can only talk of her accomplishments, her fine clothes and rank; she despises other people, and all that they have learned. It is true she has acquired several accomplishments, for her father has a large fortune; but sense she certainly wants, or she would not talk so much. I wished to have loved her; but since she behaves to me as if I was nothing compared to her, I leave her to her own folly.'

The rest of the company gathered round these two girls, and all agreed that Leonora was haughty and foolish. 'Let her go,' said Charles; 'a miss who knows so much is not fit company for us; we might rumple the lace on her fine dress. Who will play at questions and commands?'

'I, I,' cried they all, and away they ran to a seat at the upper end of the garden to begin the play.

This was the right play for the girls; they could amuse themselves without being teased by their flounces and feathers. Every child must relate a story, recollect a riddle, a little song or a proverb; and those who could not call one to mind immediately were obliged to pay a forfeit. This always furnished something to joke and laugh about, and the company soon became so merry, that their laughing echoed all round the garden.

The haughty, vain Leonora, who saw herself excluded from this amusement, was ready to bite her nails with vexation. She walked up and down the path with a grave step, looking at them as if she expected to be invited by some one to play with them; but no one took notice of her. She passed by with a pretty pocket-book in her hand, hoping

that they would ask to see it, and admire its silver clasp and enamelled figures. But instead of that the little folks began to whisper, and then burst into a loud laugh.

Leonora perceiving that they were laughing at her, she turned away blushing with anger, and at last began to weep because she could not vent her passion on them.

Then she happened to meet her father, who was a sensible man, and saw with pain that his wife spoiled her daughter. 'What is the matter with you? Why do you weep? Has any accident befallen you?' 'How should I laugh,' answered she; 'those children have no manners. They sit there together, and laugh and play without inviting me. They appear what they are. poor vulgar creatures; I ought not to have expected better from them. Would you believe it, when I passed by they laughed me out of countenance? Is not that very rude and ill-bred?'

'True,' said her father, 'it was indeed very rude; but perhaps you offended them first?'

'I?' answered she; 'I have done nothing to them. I would not demean myself to quarrel with such.' She stopped short, because she saw a frown on her father's brow. She then related to him that she had only told them how her singing was admired, and that she spoke French remarkably well. 'I told them indeed,' added she, 'that I was soon to learn Italian, and kept them at a distance, that they might not tear my lace, they were so rude.' 'Leonora, Leonora,' said he, 'you have acted very simply. If you wished to be respected and loved, and that people should like to be in your company, you must not always speak of yourself and your talents, for you will then certainly disgust them. You must attend to what others say, and observe their good qualities, and not be eager to obtrude the little you know on everybody you meet. I am not surprised that they laughed at you. If a man was to be in my company who only talked of himself, and took care to let me see that he thought me an inferior, because he had a larger fortune than me, I should myself laugh in his face. For a proud man is always ridiculous.'

He took her out of the garden and sent her home, telling

her, as he led her to the carriage, that he would take away her fine clothes, and send her to a little farmhouse in the country, if she did not soon appear to have more sense, for pride is folly. A fool may wear fine clothes, but a fool will never become wise.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE other children continued playing with the same cheerfulness, and they became quite merry when they drew out the forfeits. One held the forfeit over the head of another, who mentioned some droll thing which the owner was to do to redeem it. Sometimes they were obliged to turn into rhyme what they had just said, and to fill up verses after the rhymes, or last words in each line, had been written down with a pencil ; or to find out some resemblance in two things which appeared to be very different ; for instance, between a carp and a lark. Others were commanded to receive some good advice from each of their playmates ; thus was the amusement varied. As they were civil, good-natured children, they took care not to say anything, even in joke, which could offend the rest. Endeavouring to please each other, they were so pleased themselves that they grew more and more delighted with their sports, and every moment furnished a new subject to joke and laugh at.

They might have played till they were tired, if they had not been interrupted. The twilight had already overtaken them, and some of them wished for a light that they might continue to play in the summer-house. But they were stopped short by a servant, who came to tell them that supper waited for them.

‘What, eat so soon again?’ said Charles, a little angrily ; ‘I wish they would keep the supper to themselves, and allow us to remain together and play till it is time to go home.’ But they were obliged to go, because the servant reminded them that it would be rude and disrespectful if they did not attend the company when they were sent for.

They now again all surrounded the table, and took their seats with great form. The greater part of the guests began

to eat the various dainties spread before them, though they did not feel the least hunger. Only Mr. Jones, the Professor, and a few others contented themselves with some fruit and a crust of bread, and sought for their pleasure in conversation with those who sat next to them.

But these parties were soon interrupted by one of the company, who stood up with a bumper in his hand, and drank to the health of the bride and bridegroom, and most of the company followed his example, and filled out a bumper to the same toast; but a few of them, as well as Mr. Jones, only lifted the glass to their lips and tasted a few drops.

After that new toasts or healths were called for, and the glasses were quickly emptied, but the most reasonable part of the company only sipped a little every time, and drank as much as they could without injuring their health.

A certain young man, who was so foolish as to believe that there was something noble and manly in being able to drink much, remarked that Mr. Jones had not emptied his glass when the toast came to him.

'Very well, Mr. Jones,' said he, sneeringly; 'I believe you pass the bottle without filling your glass, fie for shame!'

'Why should I be ashamed?' answered Mr. Jones. 'Have I done something wrong?'

'You are very right to be sure,' said the other; 'but when one is in company it is ridiculous to be singular.' 'But,' continued Mr. Jones, 'why must I drink? Is it to raise or depress my spirits?'

'Certainly,' said the drinker, 'to raise your spirits; you see how lively I am, and all the honest fellows who drink with me.'

'Allow me, then,' returned Mr. Jones, 'to drink just as much as agrees with me, and I shall be in a very good humour, but if I am persuaded to drink more, I should to-morrow pass a very uncomfortable day.'

The young man laughed, and ridiculed his prudence, but he was not to be moved by a foolish laugh, and let them push about the glass, and drink fresh toasts without forgetting his resolution.

They had not gone on long at this rate, before those who had drunk most lost the use of their reason. They all spoke

loud together, so that the confusion of voices in the room soon became almost insupportable. Some began to chatter, and to tell all their secrets, which, as long as they were sober, they had very carefully concealed. Others, who were always serious when they were sober, said such absurd, foolish things, that even the children could not help laughing. Several began to quarrel, and it is impossible to say where they might have ended, if the Professor, and a few more rational people, had not been very anxious to calm these hot heads. Mrs. Jones was very uneasy during this tumult, and looking every now and then at her husband, she sighed out her wish to get away; for the honest fellows were now so elevated, that no one was sheltered from insult. One of her neighbours had already thrown a glass of Burgundy on her ruffle, because his hand shook so that he could not carry it to his mouth, and she was every moment in fear lest he should throw one over her gown.

Luckily her uneasiness did not last a long time. She saw her servant in the hall, who made signs that the coach was ready. She then slipped out quietly with her husband and children, and returned home to rest.*

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE next morning Mr. Jones and his family rose at their usual hour, and all were cheerful and well. Poor Mary only had cause to complain, that she had passed a very restless night and rose with a headache. She said that her hair was so troublesome she could not sleep five minutes together, and she said in a sorrowful voice, she hoped she should not soon be again under the hands of the hair-dresser. Mrs. Jones now went to manage her family affairs, Mary and Charles to their master, and Mr. Jones to the counting-house, where he did business for some hours.

After he had done he went to the exchange, and called on some of the persons with whom he had been in company the evening before. He was not admitted at the first house, because the servant said his master was still in bed,

* It is to be feared that such a scene was possible both at English and German weddings.

and was so sick he was obliged to take several draughts of camomile tea. The second person he visited was only just risen, though it was near twelve o'clock. He was sitting in an arm-chair, and looked as pale as death.

Mr. Jones asked him how he did this morning?

'Very, very sick,' said he; 'I drank too much yesterday. I have often resolved to be moderate, for I am not very fond of wine, but one is led away by example. When I am in company where they push the bottle round, and call me a milk-sop, to avoid being laughed at, and to look like a man, I imitate them and forget my resolution. I drink one glass, and another, and another, thinking always that one more cannot be of much consequence. So I go on till the spirit mounts into my brain, and then I scarcely know or care what I do. But I feel it with a vengeance afterwards, here.' He now struck his fist against his head, saying, 'Am I not a foolish weak man, who cannot govern myself? To tickle my palate for a few moments and to avoid the ridicule of fools, I make myself sick and out of humour for whole days together, and bring on an early old age. I am reckoned an old man before my time. Every day some feast occurs, and I go to one to forget the pain I suffered from the other. Look at my red face, and see my legs, they begin to swell; I am almost afraid I shall fall into a dropsy. This is a miserable day for me; my head aches as if it would burst; and I am so stupid, I shall not be able to do any business to-day. This morning my stomach was so squeamish, I could not touch a bit of breakfast, and I know I shall not relish a morsel all day; and when I think of the thoughtless expressions I let drop yesterday, and how many acquaintance I have offended by my silly jokes, I am ready to stamp with indignation against myself. But you look very well.'

'Yes,' answered Mr. Jones, 'I never was in better health in my life. The company and the sight of my friend's happiness has raised my spirits, and the few glasses of wine I drank did me more good than harm. I rose at my usual hour, and have already done my business in the counting-house.'

'You are a happy man, and I now recollect that I remarked your moderation yesterday, and that you did not drink more than you thought necessary to raise your spirits without heating your brain. You are a sober man, you practised a little self-denial, and now you have your reward; your head is light, and do you not every moment bite your lips to think what an irresolute fool I was? If I could but follow your example!'

'It has long been a fixed principle of mine,' continued Mr. Jones, 'that whoever will enjoy health and content must be moderate. I, in general, drink three glasses; and, in company, four. And when I have drank these I have done, though they bring in a variety of the richest wines. If I found out that drinking more than one glass affected my head or stomach, I would be content with one.'

The other shook him by the hand and assured him that he would try to do so too. Mr. Jones then wished that he might not again forget his resolution, and left him to pay another visit. He called on Mr. Goodman, and found him too unwell. He rubbed his forehead and complained of lowness of spirits and heaviness. Mr. Jones was surprised because he had observed that Mr. Goodman was a very sober man, and he expressed his astonishment, saying, 'You drank very little wine, why are you sick?'

'As to the wine, I drank very sparingly,' said Mr. Goodman; 'but those artificial high-seasoned dishes do not agree with my stomach. And is it to be wondered at? The cook mixes a number of things brought from the East and West Indies, Germany, France, and Italy together, without thinking what effect this mixture will have on our stomachs, or how injurious it is to the blood; if it tickles the palate they are satisfied. Is it possible that such a hodge-podge should digest, or that such artificial compositions should not injure the blood and interrupt the simple course of nature? Believe me, Mr. Jones, made dishes are subtle poisons. If I was daily to indulge myself with them I believe that in a few years I should fall into some lingering disorder, or grow melancholy. I am never so well as when I have beef or

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mutton simply dressed, and plenty of vegetables. What do you say?’

‘You are perfectly right, dear sir,’ answered Mr. Jones, ‘my food is always very simple; I never have dainties, or two kinds of meat at my table, except I have company: and even then I take care not to eat more than usual, because there is a variety of dainties; for if there are twenty dishes before me I choose the most simple to make my meal of, that I may not become heavy and unable to exercise my mind. My children are accustomed to the same fare; they seldom drink tea or coffee, and I really believe that their health and gaiety arises from temperance.’

This gave Mr. Goodman an opportunity to speak of his children; and from his children the conversation insensibly turned to his school. For Mr. Goodman being the usher of a grammar school, the greater part of the labour devolved on him.

‘Have many learned men been educated at your school?’ asked Mr. Jones.

‘Of learned men,’ said he, ‘I cannot much boast; my learning is not very extensive; but this I may say, that several young men have left our school of whom I am not ashamed to own that I had a hand in their education. I have, however, two assistants who are worthy, industrious men; it would be strange if the boys did not improve when they are so closely attended to.’

Mr. Jones received so much pleasure from Mr. Goodman’s company that he would have conversed still longer with him if he had not heard the clock strike one before he thought it was near dinner time. He started up and said, ‘I am very sorry to leave you, but I must hasten home to give my family, by my exactness, an example of punctuality.’

‘Good morning; pray recollect, whenever business calls you to Bristol, that I shall be glad to see you.’

CHAPTER XXVII.

WHEN Mr. Jones returned he was witness to a very disagreeable scene. As he passed by the parlour door he heard a very loud voice and angry tone; he opened the door and saw a woman with his wife; she foamed with rage, and was loading her with abuse. He had scarcely entered the room when his wife caught his hand * and said, 'I am glad you are come!'

'What does all this mean?' asked Mr. Jones. 'Do not ask me,' said Mrs. Jones; 'I cannot tell you now.'

'Yes,' cried the furious woman, striking her fist on the table, 'I will soon let you see with whom you have to do; you will not dare to treat me so again. You think, indeed, because you are a rich merchant's wife, you may treat as you please a poor person without being called to account. Your servant—it shall cost you dear, I promise you; you will have reason to remember me.'

'Good woman,' said Mr. Jones, 'what is the matter? Do you forget that you are in a decent house? If you have any complaint to make, if you have been used ill, moderate your anger, and let me hear quietly what it is.'

Woman. Be so good as not to speak so warmly yourself, Mr. Jones. Begin by reproving your wife, then you may speak to me.

Mr. Jones. But what has my wife done?

Woman. She is a wicked woman; can you ask what she has done? Is she not a backbiter? Did she not say that I was a disorderly woman, who neglected my family, and drank all I could earn or beg? And if it was true, what business had she with it? Does she give me the money to buy it with?'

Mr. Jones. But, perhaps, my wife did not say so; from whom did you hear it?'

Woman. Oh, your servant—ask such questions of a fool. I am satisfied that I had it from good authority; and you need not trouble yourself to inquire from whom I heard it.

* Fell into his arms.

Mr. Jones. Good woman, to cut the matter short, let me know who told you, and I will examine into the foundation of this bustle. If not, you had better go home; and if you have any real cause for complaint, you may apply to me whenever you please.

Woman. If you must know it, I heard it at little James's house.

Mr. Jones. Very well, I will inquire into the affair; and if I find that you have been censured unjustly, we will try to make you some amends, and my wife will ask your pardon, for she never persists in an error. Are you satisfied with this promise?

The woman would still have gone on scolding, but Mr. Jones having threatened to send for a constable to show her the way out of the house, she did not think it safe to stay any longer. After uttering some more vulgar expressions, she went out and flung the door so violently back, that all the windows rattled. Poor Mrs. Jones threw herself pale and trembling on a sofa. Mr. Jones too was a little disconcerted; he seated himself by his wife, pressed her hand, and after a few moments' silence said, 'My dear, what have you done to exasperate this fury?'

'I will tell you all I know,' answered Mrs. Jones. 'That woman worked for me; but she was so careless, and required such an extravagant price for what she did, that I determined to make some inquiries concerning her character, and heard that she was a drunkard; and, in short, a woman who had no sound principles or notions of order or religion. At the same time Mrs. Sandford, whom I mentioned to you, was recommended to me as an industrious respectable woman, who had seen better days. I then left her shop, and went to employ Mrs. Sandford. I suppose she has heard of this, and came to vent her spleen on me. I may have mentioned her vices; for I was sorry to hear that a woman, who could have maintained her family in a creditable manner, led such a disorderly life. But, if I have spoken of it, it must have been in this room, for you know I never mention things of this kind out of my own family; because I think that the faults of our neighbours should only be exposed to

our family and friends by way of example, and not made the amusement of those idle hours when acquaintance meet.'

'I now recollect,' replied Mr. Jones, 'that you said something of this kind to me when you came home from Mrs. Sandford's; but it makes me very uneasy to find that what we say amongst ourselves should be repeated. There must be a tell-tale in our house, and I shall not be easy till I find out who it is.'

He then sat down and wrote to the father of little James, who was the favourite playfellow of Charles, and related the whole accident, requesting him to inquire which of his family had told the story, and from whom they had heard it.

He returned for answer that his maid had been gossiping with the woman at her shop, and repeated to her what James had told her; Charles had mentioned it to him when they were playing together.

Mr. Jones instantly sent for Charles, and related, with a disturbed countenance and voice, in what a disagreeable situation he found his poor mother. Charles was ready to shed tears when he saw his mother seated pale and trembling on the sofa; he ran to her and kissed her, saying, 'Pray do not vex yourself lest you should grow sick.'

'But,' asked Mr. Jones, 'do you know who is the cause of all this vexation? Thou art! Thou hast repeated, out of the house, what thy mother mentioned in confidence to me.'

'I?' answered Charles. 'How could I repeat it out of the house? How could you think such a thing, dear father? I have never spoken a word to this wicked woman in my life.'

'I believe you,' interrupted his father; 'but you have repeated that to James, which your mother confidentially imparted to me, which she spoke in the ear of her friend.'

Charles was confused, and owned that he had mentioned it to James; but he did not suppose that he would have been so ill-natured as to have told it to the woman again.

'He merely did what you had done before,' said Mr. Jones; 'he only told the maid, and did not suppose that she would have mentioned it again. But she carried it to the woman's ear.'

This account frightened and astonished poor Charles. He

wet his sick mother's hand with his tears, and begged her to forgive him, for that he did not mean any harm, nor could have guessed the consequence of his folly.

A servant then entered, and asked if they 'would not have the dinner brought up, for that it had been ready above two hours, and was almost dried to a chip before the fire.'

Mrs. Jones waved her hand for him to leave the room, and sunk again on the sofa, saying, 'I cannot relish a bit to-day; that woman has taken away my appetite.'

'Nor do I care for anything,' said Mr. Jones.

Now Charles wept bitterly, and begged his parents to taste something.

'Why,' asked Mr. Jones, 'do you wish us to eat? it would do us more harm than good. See, thoughtless child, all this vexation has been occasioned by your tattling.'

Charles was ready to sink into the earth with trouble, for he sincerely loved his parents; yet he now saw that he had made his mother sick and his father uneasy. This sight gave him great pain, and he promised to be more careful, and never to repeat again the conversations he heard in the family.

'I believe,' said his father, 'that you are very sorry for the trouble you have caused us. I perceive, also, that you have made a firm resolution never to chatter so idly any more; but I do not yet know whether you can keep your word. I must for some time consider you as a child who has betrayed his father and mother, and send you out of the room when we are speaking of anything we wish to keep secret. Is not that reasonable?'

Charles acknowledged his fault sobbing, and again begged his mother not to vex herself, or it would make him cry his eyes out. He then went to look for his sister, to tell her all that had happened, how pale his mother looked, and how angry his father was,—and prayed her to take care and not tell any family secrets to her cousin Charlotte, lest she should also vex her parents. She promised him, and he gave her his hand, saying, that 'in future he would be careful not to talk for the sake of talking.'

They had now only to consider how they should silence this troublesome woman. Mr. Jones knew very well that all

his wife had said was true; yet he did not wish to expose her again to the fury of such a woman. He went to her himself, and offered her a guinea, if she would hold her tongue and let the matter drop; but declared he would proceed against her to the uttermost rigour of the law if she presumed to come to his house again. The woman knew very well that her conduct would not bear examination, and fearing to lose more customers, she was glad to accept of the terms, and promised to be quiet.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE following morning Mr. Jones received a note from the Professor, in which he requested him to spend that afternoon with them in his father-in-law's garden. He assured him, that he had been much mortified on his wedding day, in not being able to enjoy the society of his friends. He added, that he now had only invited his particular friends to pass one cheerful afternoon in friendly conversation before his departure.

Mr. Jones had really some business to settle, and was not willing to put it off, while the desire of conversing with so many sensible men, the greater part of whom were to depart the next day, gained the upper hand, and moved him to accept the invitation.

The question now was whether he should take the children with him. His heart inclined him to take them, because he loved them tenderly; but he wished first to know if they had behaved in such a manner as to deserve this reward. He applied to his wife. She gave a very favourable account of Mary; and added that, for some days past, she had been perfectly satisfied with her conduct. She had been very industrious and on the watch to please; nay, that she had with pleasure remarked that she had been more attentive to keep her person clean and her clothes in order. Mr. Jones expressed the pleasure this account gave him, and instantly determined that Mary should be of the party. 'But what shall we do with Charles?'

'I should gladly take him with us too, for he has behaved

very well ever since he promised to govern his tongue ; but the time of trial is not yet expired. As we are to be amongst friends, we may converse about things which should not be repeated, and if he was to tattle again, we might be involved in fresh troubles.' Mrs. Jones was of the same opinion, and it was agreed that Charles should stay at home this evening.

Mary was now informed that they were going to drink tea in a beautiful garden, and that they would take her with them, if her drawers and closet were in order.

'Oh,' said she smiling, 'you will not catch them in confusion again, I believe. I first tried to keep them in order to please my mother and to avoid the dreadful pain I felt when I was left at home alone; and now I find it is so pleasant to know where to find anything I want, that I will never be careless any more.' 'All my commands have the same tendency,' said her mother. 'I assist your weak mind, and I am endeavouring to make you wise and happy, when I deny you any present pleasure, for you are yet too young to know what is really good.' She then looked over her drawers, closet, and work basket, and finding them all in order she smiled so good humouredly on Mary, that she was delighted, and catching hold of her hand, 'I will never be careless again, that you may always look at me as you do now, and that I may never cry as bitterly as I did when I saw the coach drive off. Oh ! that was a sad day ; I shall never forget it ! no, never !'

Afterwards they called Charles, and asked him if he should like to be of the party ? 'Oh yes, oh yes,' answered Charles in one breath. 'I believe you,' said his father, 'and it would add to my pleasure if you partook of it. But we are to meet a select company, and may converse in an unreserved manner about many things, which we should not choose to have repeated to mere acquaintance.

Charles interrupted him, 'I never will ; indeed, I never will repeat a conversation again. I am not a tattler now.'

'I believe,' continued his father, 'that you are firmly resolved to govern your tongue ; but before I can trust you, I must see proofs that you have conquered this fault, and bad habits are not overcome in a moment : you must suffer

for your folly or you would soon forget it.' So the sorrowful Charles was obliged to remain at home. He went to walk in the garden alone, and sitting down under a tree, he wept, and for an hour could think of nothing but his own folly. Then wiping his eyes and biting his tongue, he said, 'I will teach you, Mr. Tongue, to keep within my teeth. I shall remember how many sad hours I owe to my own thoughtlessness.'

Mr. and Mrs. Jones, with Mary in her hand, now walked to Clifton, and met in a pleasant garden some intimate friends. Besides the Professor's family, they saw Mr. Goodman, with his wife and children, and the respectable old man who had been the Professor's benefactor.

They drank coffee and eat cakes in a summer house, and conversed without observing the charming garden they came to see. Mr. Jones found it very close, and stood up, saying 'Of what use is that beautiful garden, if we remain shut up in this room? Would it not be better to enjoy the fresh air, and observe the various plants which grow there in such abundance?' The whole company owned they wished to taste the sweet air, and breathe with more freedom; and they each took the companion affection or chance threw in their way.

Mr. Jones took the Professor's arm, and they walked up and down, conversing without reserve, for they were sincere honest men, who loved each other. Mr. Jones was heartily glad when the Professor told him that he intended to take Mr. Goodman's son with him to Oxford and direct his studies. 'His father,' said he, 'appears to me to be a very good man.'

'Yes, an excellent man, indeed!' said the Professor; 'if all the schoolmasters I know did their duty as conscientiously as he does, we should soon have another kind of world. He is as anxious about his scholars as if they were all his own children; and he never neglects them one day without the most pressing necessity. He has such an admirable method, that we always rejoice when a student comes from his school; for we in general find them industrious, orderly young men, prepared to receive our instructions.'

‘But the master and the other assistants,* they should not be forgotten in the praise you bestow on the school.’

‘No,’ answered the Professor; ‘they deserve some, they are respectable; but Mr. Goodman has made them so by example and remonstrances; the school was in a lamentable state when he came to it. And have you not heard of his writings? He is reckoned one of our best writers. He has lately published a book which has been much admired.’

‘I am astonished,’ said Mr. Jones, ‘when I conversed with him he never boasted of his abilities and learning, nor even of the scholars he had formed, but praised those who assisted to conduct the school.’

‘Yes, yes,’ continued the Professor, ‘that is his way. He is a very modest man. He says nothing of himself and his own abilities, but dwells on all the good he observes in others; and on this very account I particularly esteem him. If he had still more learning and superior talents, and was always boasting of them, and bringing them forward to notice, I should not, I assure you, either respect or love him as I now do. All the qualities we possess lose above half their value when we praise ourselves. And of what use is this praise? Men need only be virtuous and do their duty, and others will hear of it without their telling them. A good horse cannot praise himself, yet I discover his good qualities, if I have only rode him a single hour.’

While they were speaking, Mr. Goodman himself happened to meet them. Mr. Jones went up to him with respect; and cordially pressing his hand said, ‘Worthy man, receive the homage due to your virtues! I have heard of your many virtues! I have heard of your talents, your benevolence and industry, though you were so silent; but even this modesty increases my veneration. The praise we receive from others always reflects more honour on us than when we boast of ourselves.’ ‘I perceive,’ answered Mr. Goodman, ‘that the Professor has been talking of me; he loves me, and always discovers more merit in me than anyone else can, I fear.’

They then entered into a friendly dispute; and Mr. Goodman turned the conversation with his usual modesty, saying,

* His Conrector and his Tertius.

‘It is our duty and happiness to be as good as we can, and be more careful to correct our faults than boast of our good qualities or virtues.’

CHAPTER XXIX.

MARY chatted during this time with little Emilia, Mr. Goodman’s daughter, who gave her a description of everything remarkable in her village and house. Amongst other things, she said that her present mother was not her own mother, but a step-mother: her own mother, she said sorrowfully, she had never known, because she died when she was an infant.

‘A step-mother, do you say?’ replied Mary, quite surprised; ‘a step-mother—poor child! I have always heard that step-mothers were very cruel; that they beat poor children, and do not give them enough to eat.’

‘Do not believe such stories, dear Mary,’ answered Emilia. ‘I remember I heard the same thing, but I found it very different. It is possible there may have been many cruel step-mothers, and for that reason I wish that all good children may keep their own parents; but my step-mother is certainly the best woman in the world. She has her own children and my mother’s, but she loves us as well as her own. The cakes and fruit she distributes amongst us are always in equal shares. When they are naughty they are always punished as severely as I am, when I am careless or neglect my work. She has only once given me a blow, and I am ashamed to tell you that I deserved it, for telling her a lie and persisting in it, though she took me gently by the hand, and told me what a dreadful thing a lie was. And this is her usual method: she melts me by her kindness, and I promise to try to become better; for I know now that I acquired some bad habits before my father married again. What then would have become of me if I had not had a step-mother? My own mother was gone to heaven. I never saw her, though my father says I sucked her milk till a few days before she died: but my step-mother had pity on me, and has taught me to read and work; nay, to tell truth and be orderly; my father loves me twice as well as he

did, and I do love my father, though people say I am passionate and have a bad temper. I wish to be good. And then, when I was sick, yes, very sick, she sat up with me all night, and was so kind—who knows where I should be now, but for her!’

While she was speaking, they met the gardener. ‘John,’ said she, ‘may I gather a nosegay? My mother bid me always ask you, lest I should gather some flowers your master set a particular value on, or any you were saving for seed.’

‘You are very good, miss,’ replied he; ‘but you may pluck any you see in these left-hand beds, only do not touch my carnations!’ She then sought for some of the sweetest flowers, and bound them up into a pretty nosegay. She ran to look for her step-mother, as soon as Mary said it was very pretty, and found her sitting on a bank; she stuck the flowers hastily in her bosom, and said, with tears in her eyes, ‘dear mother.’

Mrs. Jones did not meet with such an agreeable companion. She walked with the sister of the bride, whose conversation she found very tiresome; nay, it gave her great pain. She had been brought up by a relation; and, in her childhood, been with thoughtless, idle people, and had learned from them the dreadful custom of slandering, or speaking ill of everybody. Mrs. Jones did not yet know her evil propensity; she took her arm in a friendly manner, and said, ‘Your sister’s marriage with such a worthy man gave me great pleasure. I congratulate you, and sincerely wish that they may all their lives enjoy the happiness they merit.’ Hannah,* for that was the name of this malicious girl, thanked her coldly for the part she took in the happiness of her family. ‘But,’ continued she, with a sneering laugh, ‘I know not whether the Doctor’s happiness, or, if you please, the Professor’s, will be so very great. Now it is only the honeymoon; as the vulgar say, the sky is full of stars. But when he has his wife at home a month or two, he will soon see what a fine choice he has made. I really do not know what he will do with her. She knows nothing of the management of a family, and she has such a bad temper,

* Friederike.

God help those who are to live always with her; for my part I am very glad that she is now out of our house. The worthy Professor will have trouble enough with her; but then (she laughed again) the worthy Professor has no right to find fault with her. I know him, and know all his tricks. I must not mention them—but—Mrs. Jones—Mrs. Jones, if you knew what I know, you would form quite a different opinion of him.'

Mrs. Jones now testified her surprise, and assured her that she had never 'heard anything but good of him and her sister. Besides, Mr. Goodman had praised them, and he was certainly a worthy, sensible man.'

'He may be a learned man,' answered Hannah, 'but he is nothing more. He leaves all things at sixes and sevens; and if any one will give him a glass of wine, he will say all that is kind and good of them for it. I do not love to speak ill of others; but I know very well what they say of his wife. Ha! ha! ha! she can skin a flint in the management of her house; you will see more sunshine than bread there, I hear.'

Mrs. Jones earnestly endeavoured to defend her friends, for she knew them, and would not suffer such artful calumny to shake her good opinion. But the more she defended their characters, the more ill this malicious girl said of them. She turned the conversation on other persons; and she had something bad to tell of every one. If she could not instantly recollect something, she turned up her nose so scornfully, that any one would have supposed that she knew something very bad of them. Mrs. Jones listened above half an hour to these malicious slanders, for she could not stop her. Unable to endure it any longer with patience, she looked at her with contempt, and abruptly interrupted her: 'Madam,' said she to her, 'you have recollected something ill of every person you have mentioned; I should be glad to hear you, just to turn the torrent, say something good of any of them.'

'How can I help it,' said she, 'if people are not better? How can I speak well of them, when they have nothing good in them?'

'What,' continued Mrs. Jones, 'are you not ashamed of yourself? Have you heard nothing good of any of those persons you have been calumniating? I love and esteem them all, because I know them to be good; but if I only believed half what you have said of them, they would sink so low in my opinion, they would forfeit the place they have in my esteem; I should be forced to despise them as being destitute of virtue and honour. Is not this detestable? Hannah! Hannah! if you robbed me of my watch or purse, it would be very wrong; but it would not be so blamable an action as slandering, if you deprived me of my reputation, and thus robbed me of my honour! However precious my watch may be, I can purchase another if it is stolen; but gold cannot rub out the stains you might fix on my good name. But think how much you have injured yourself. How can I respect a person who has spoken in such a style of her own sister and brother? If I was to repeat to them, to Mr. Goodman, or any of the other persons you have mentioned, only half what you have said of them, what do you suppose would be the consequence?'

'What do you say, dear madam?' interrupted the frightened Hannah; 'surely you will not repeat what I have spoken to you, because I considered you as my friend? I did not mean any harm.'

'If I,' answered Mrs. Jones, 'spare you, you will soon betray yourself. You will soon lose every friend you have; all your acquaintance will fly from you; they will despise and loathe you. We loathe a slanderer as we do a venomous viper. I, at least, shall take care in future not to come so near you, lest you should again fasten on my ear, as you have done to-day, to instil poison into my heart. For whoever speaks ill to me of all the world, will certainly not speak well of me when my back is turned.'

Saying so, she hastily left the malicious girl standing alone, not knowing what to do with herself, she was so vexed. She walked angrily up and down the garden, and, meeting her sister, would have begun to speak ill of Mrs. Jones; but she would not hear her, and turned from her,

saying, 'I know you, sister; and I know Mrs. Jones. I have not time to listen to you.'

This made her very angry; when the whole company were cheerful, and walked about chatting and laughing, Hannah flew to a dark corner, and seated herself there, the prey of her own malice.

CHAPTER XXX.

MRS. JONES then walked round the garden to seek for a companion in whose conversation she should find more pleasure. She first met Mary, who told her, with joy, what a good step-mother Emilia had. A little after she met the Professor's godfather, who walked with her all round the garden, pointed out what was most beautiful, explained the nature of plants, and showed her how carefully the seed was preserved in them all, that nothing might perish. He made Mary remark how the sap circulated through their leaves and stalks, in the same manner as the blood through the human body; and, after conversing in this instructive manner, he went into the summer-house to rest himself, and desired them to pursue their walk.

They turned out of the garden into a little inviting lane, and saw a woman sitting spinning with three children round her. Mary observed them first, and said to her mother, 'Pray look, what a nasty woman! What dirty children! They have such tattered clothes, are without stockings and shoes, and their feet are so black—O fie!'

Mrs. Jones whispered her in the ear, 'You must not so soon despise these poor people, my child; they may be very good, though they have scarcely rags enough to cover them, and are dirty.' The bride's mother now looked out of the garden gate, and, seeing Mrs. Jones, advanced towards her.

'There is a look of goodness and honesty in that woman's countenance which interests me,' said Mrs. Jones, addressing her.

'Yes, madam, I always feel pleasure when I pass by her. There she sits all day spinning or knitting to earn bread for her children; and when she can get nothing to do she

comes to me to weed the garden. They have been at work in the garden to-day, or the children would not look so dirty; for though they have but few clothes, she keeps them clean. Look, there comes her husband; poor man, he lost the use of his hands by working at a white-lead manufactory. He went into the hospital, and his wife sold one thing after another to maintain him. I heard of her distress. You know I am not rich, and have a large family, but I let them turn the house in which I kept my garden-tools into a little dwelling, and that woman now maintains her husband and children. She is, indeed, a good woman! I cannot bear to see the poor despised, or that people should think themselves better than them, because they wear fine clothes and have dainties to eat. And what would the rich do without the poor? We should be obliged to do all our work ourselves. The garden you have admired would be covered with weeds, but for these little hands. What should we do for linen and stockings, if the poor did not spin? What a quantity of work I should have to do! I must spin and knit for my whole family, and take the rake and hoe to keep my garden in order. I fancy I should not have more time to attend to my dress than this poor woman. Indeed, she is my superior; how many idle hours have I spent when she has been toiling to do her duty, though despised by the world. God, the great Father of us all, sees her virtues, and will reward them; nay, he even now rewards them. She has a contented heart; I often hear her singing at work, and she enjoys good health. I have some of the comforts of life, but they all come from the labours of the poor. I buy the wool they have spun, have it made into clothes, and send it to France and Holland, and the profit which arises from it supports my family. Pardon my warmth, dear madam, I have still in my mind the quarrel I had this morning with my unhappy daughter Hannah. Would you believe it, that weak girl called these poor people beggars; but I did not let her foolish pride pass unreprieved. "Whom do you call beggars?" said I. "Did you acquire your own fortune?" "If your father had not been as industrious, and luckier than this honest man, you would be as poor as these

children. If their clothes are not good, they are well patched, which proves that they spend their time better than you do, who sit half the day before the glass curling your hair. If they could employ as much time about their persons as you do, and were not obliged to work from morning till night to earn their bread, their clothes would be in better order than yours are, I will venture to say. I own that they want manners; but where should they learn manners, who have never conversed with well-educated people? However, they are civil and good-natured, and that is far preferable to the insincere compliments you use, who praise people to their faces, and ridicule them when their backs are turned. If you call this good breeding, I heartily wish my daughter had never been so well bred.”

Mrs. Jones drew near to the good woman, and entered into conversation with her in the most friendly manner; inquired about her husband's illness, the ages of her children, and what she intended to do with them. The woman was quite delighted with her attention, and gave an account of her distress in such simple words, that Mrs. Jones's eyes filled with tears. ‘God fits the back to the burden, madam,’ said she, ‘and when he takes away one support gives another; when my husband could no longer work, madam here gave us a house, and while I have health my babes shall not want a bit of bread, praised be God for it! and my husband too earns a little matter by carrying messages to Bristol: he has no hands to carry parcels with, for, bless your heart! he is as weak as a child. We cut his meat for him, and help him on with his clothes; and he richly deserves all we can do for him. You would not see us in this plight if he could work. Yes, he was always a sober man; I never had to follow him to an alehouse, as some poor women are obliged to do, with a babe crying at their breast, thank God for it! And now he cannot work, he reads good books to us, so my children will have a little learning, and not be brought up like brutes.’ Mary was then ashamed of herself for having despised such good people, whom her mother treated with so much respect; besides, she had listened attentively to the account which the lady had

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given of this poor woman's distress, and how she loved her husband and children—she heard her say that God loved her. She then blushed for her folly, and trembled lest her mother should mention it, and compare her with the foolish, proud Hannah. Creeping behind her mother she advanced to the children, began to talk to them, and slipped all the money she had in her pocket into a little girl's hand, bidding her not for the world to say a word of it to her mother till she was out of the garden.

Mrs. Jones then took leave of this woman, saying, 'I will send your children some clothes before the cold weather comes on; and do you continue to be as industrious as you have been hitherto, and you will be content, as content as I am. The things I most value are a good conscience and health, a sober husband, and good children—and you have all these. Money never purchased contentment. If, with my fortune, I had a weak constitution, or a bad husband, I should wish myself in your situation spinning at a wheel.'

The poor woman was affected—she pressed Mrs. Jones's hand, and said, 'Thank you, kind madam, may God bless you and your children.'

Mrs. Jones had scarcely turned her back, when the poor woman said to her children, 'Gracious heart! what a pretty spoken gentlewoman that is—how good-natured—she has not a bit of pride in her; and the little miss, she is as good-tempered as an angel.'

'Do you hear, madam,' said the lady of the house to Mrs. Jones, 'what the poor woman says?' Your conversation with her has raised you highly in my esteem; you have given her more pleasure than if you had haughtily thrown her a guinea. It must be dreadfully mortifying to poor people to see the rich enjoy so many things which they are obliged to do without, and to feel that they are ridiculed and despised, because they have them not; and it would not be surprising if such treatment roused their hatred, for a worm will turn again when it is trodden on. But a friendly look, a few kind words, will gain their hearts—make their cares lighter. They wish us to remember that we are all de-

scended from the same parents—all look up to the same God.'

The day now began to shut in; it was twilight, and preparations were made for a moderate supper, of which they all partook, except Hannah, who retired to her own room, pretending that she had got the toothache. They all seemed to be glad of her absence, because they knew that in company she did nothing but pry into every conversation to gather something which she could tell again, and to find matter to feed her malicious spirit. She was a poor unhappy creature; they who are eager to find faults in others have seldom many good qualities of their own. They spent the evening so pleasantly, no one thought of going home till it struck twelve; then they were obliged to separate, and took leave of each other with assurances of friendship and remembrance.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE frequent amusements in which Mr. Jones's family had been engaged for some time past interrupted too much their regular employments. Charles had not done carefully what his master every day required; Mary's work was left unfinished; Mrs. Jones had several things to do in the family, and Mr. Jones many accounts to settle, which made him say to his wife and children, 'We have lately enjoyed much pleasure, perhaps more than we ought, because we have neglected our necessary employments. But now it is proper to set bounds to amusements, and return to our employments with fresh vigour; else we shall lose by degrees all desire for employment, and our whole family would then fall into such disorder, that we should no longer find any comfort in it.'

He desired Charles, after he had given this caution, to prepare his exercise, and went himself to his counting-house.

At first the children did not much relish work, and even Mr. Jones himself found it more troublesome than usual; but imperceptibly everything returned into its former order.

Every one fulfilled his daily task, and even Mr. Noel grew every day more and more industrious. They all found themselves very well, and were convinced that regular employments afford more real satisfaction than continual amusements and feasts.

This order was not interrupted till the middle of October, when the two maids begged Mrs. Jones to let them go to a fair in a neighbouring village. Scarcely were they gone out of the house, when the man-servant entered, and bursting into a violent fit of crying, he could only bring out, 'What shall I do! what shall I do!' Mrs. Jones was alarmed, and asked him what ailed him; but he could only answer, 'They say my father is dying.' Mr. Jones pitied the poor man, and asked, if he desired to see and nurse him during his illness? 'O yes! O yes!' said the man; 'let me but see him before he dies, or I shall never know a happy day again!' Mr. Jones then instantly gave him leave to go, saying, 'I would rather do all your work myself than keep you from your sick father. Go and nurse him, and ask my wife for something to take with you to revive him.' The servant hastened away with his pockets full of nourishing things for the poor sick man.

The servants having left everything in order, they fared tolerably well the remainder of the day; but the next morning, when Mary was going to wash herself, she found no water, and was obliged to go to the pump for it herself, trembling from head to foot. The children now felt the absence of the servants, and how much they were indebted to them for waiting on them. When breakfast time came, the milk was brought; but there were no clean basins to put it in, and the children must drink out of those in which some milk remained since the day before, or wash themselves. When they entered the parlour everything was in disorder, and out of its place. All stood as they had left them the night before: the floor was covered with crumbs, bits of paper, and dust; in short, it looked like a dwelling in which idle people lived.

Mrs. Jones said that to-day she must dust and sweep the room herself, since no one thought of doing it for her.

The children, who dearly loved their mother, would not suffer her to do it, but began to work themselves.

Mary took the broom and swept it clean with some labour, and Charles put the things in order.

Meanwhile the wind rose, and made the panes rattle, and the pattering of the rain and hail rendered it still more dreary. The poor children's teeth chattered, their fingers were stiff with cold, and they asked their mother if they were not to have a fire to-day?

'I should be very glad of a fire,' she replied, 'but I have nobody to light it. If then you do not choose to stand trembling, you must contrive to make a fire yourselves.'

Charles lighted some matches, and put them into the grate, but they went out. He tried again, and sometimes the wood caught fire; but they had not placed the cinders properly to admit air to draw up the blaze, so it went out again; the wood did not burn. Mary assisted as well as she could; but as she had never lighted a fire before, she did not know how to make it properly, so her help was of no avail. They stood trembling and crying till Charles's master luckily came in, and told them how they ought to place the wood, and pile the cinders lightly over it, so as to admit the air, and not heave a quantity of fresh coals on, which were damp, and would not readily burn, till the flame had some strength to curl round them.

They were now comfortable and warm: the children rubbed their hands, rejoicing and saying, 'Now we have lighted it, we will not soon stir out of the warm room.' But scarcely was Charles seated by the side of his master, when Mr. Jones entered with some letters in his hand, which must instantly be taken to the post.

'Here Charles,' said he, quickly, 'these letters must be carried to the post-office.' 'Oh, dear father,' replied he, 'I would gladly go; but see what dreadful weather it is! it rains violently; and how it blows! May I wait till the shower is over?' 'Fie, fie! the letters must go; the post never waits for good weather. Come! start up quickly, lest it should be gone out.' Then Charles ran away, and came back quite wet; he would have changed his clothes, but

had not time ; for his father sent him out again with some messages.

Mary could not stay much longer by the fire, because she had several things to do in the kitchen. When it struck one they came again into the parlour, and clapped their hands when they heard they were to have mutton-chops and apple dumplings for dinner, of which they were very fond. But when they were ready, the cloth was not laid, nor the salt-cellars brought in, nor the glasses washed. Mrs. Jones had taken care to send her husband his dinner warm into his little counting-house, where he had a great deal of business to do. But she left the children to prepare the table for themselves ; and before everything was ready, full half an hour had slipped away. They now seated themselves at table ; but the mutton was cold, and the dumplings overdone, so that their dinner did not taste half so good as they had expected.

After dinner they had still much to do ; and were so dreadfully fatigued in the evening, that they threw themselves on a sofa, scarcely able to move a limb. 'I could not have believed,' said Mary to Charles, 'that the servants had so much to do—now I feel it ; and I will never give them unnecessary trouble again. Poor people ! they are obliged to wait on us the whole day. When we are sleeping comfortably in our warm beds, they are forced to get up to light our fires and sweep our rooms, that we may find everything in order when we rise. When it rains and blows hard, we sit in a warm comfortable room ; but they must go out, and not wait till the shower is over.

'In the winter, when it freezes so hard that their fingers are quite benumbed with cold, they must go to the well for water. How often they are obliged to eat their dinners cold, and sometimes through our fault, I fear. I have frequently been ill-natured to them ; I am now very sorry for it ; I am indeed very sorry !'

'And I too,' interrupted Charles, 'am very sorry. I have often forgotten myself, and spoken very improperly to the servants. I must tell you what vexes me : I lately called Henry a blockhead, because he forgot to clean my shoes,

though the poor fellow had been running about the whole day for my father; but, believe me, I will never do it again; I will always be civil to Henry, Jenny, and Catherine, when I want them to do any thing for me. I will take care never to speak hastily to them; and, above all, not to call them names. Poor Henry, how he cried about his father; I wish I had not called him a blockhead! I shall not be easy till I ask him to forgive me.' Mary made the same resolution; and they both longed for the return of the servants.

The next morning the two maids returned; but Catherine was sent with some medicines to Henry's father; and, for three days, the children were obliged to assist Jenny to do the work of the house; and at night they were so tired that they did nothing but wish for the next day, hoping that Catherine, at least, would come back. 'Oh! if only Henry, or, at least, poor Catherine, was here!' they would say again and again. The fourth day Mary was standing at the window, thinking how much work she should have to do to-morrow, and almost afraid to think of it, when she heard some one ring the bell; she threw up the window; it was Catherine; and, at the same time, Henry ran up the steps. What joy! She forgot to pull down the sash. 'Charles! Charles!' cried she, 'Catherine is come! Henry is come!' They both ran to the street-door; and, eagerly opening it, caught hold of their hands, saying, 'Welcome! welcome! dear Henry! good Catherine! we have often wished for you.' Their pleasure was still greater when Henry informed them that his father would soon be well.

The next day every thing was again in order, and these children never afterwards behaved rudely to the servants; on the contrary, they were always civil and good-natured to them; and not only pitied them when they had more work than usual to do, but endeavoured to assist them; and resolved never more to give unnecessary trouble to those who had at all times so many hardships to bear.

CHAPTER XXXII.

IN the beginning of November, Mr. Jones thought that a little relaxation would be of use to his laborious family. He therefore proposed to Mrs. Jones an excursion to Mr. Benson's (the Curate), where they had all been so well pleased. The children had behaved, for a long time, very well; so they resolved to take them both with them.

At dinner they were acquainted with it. What joy there was when they heard of it! They soon began to consider what they should do to please the Curate's children; and they both searched in their closets to gather all their playthings together, to find something to give to George, Henry, and Caroline. Mrs. Jones thought of providing for the table; knowing that the good Curate had a very small income, and many persons to maintain, she did not wish to put him to needless expense to entertain them. She made some nice pastry herself, and had two* fowls, a ham, and a hare packed up; besides, a hamper of wine, which they wished to make their kind host a present of. The children thought the time long till they could get into the coach; and said a hundred times, 'Oh, if to-morrow was but here!' but before to-morrow they must go to rest, and wait the arrival of the so much desired morning.

Mary dreamed of nothing but the journey. Sometimes she was seated in the coach, driving away by the hills and meadows; sometimes walking in the wood where Charles had played at ball. Now came little Caroline with her bird; she ran forward, as she thought, to kiss her, and found as she awoke, that she had not little Caroline but her pillow in her arms. She was a little disappointed, but glad to shake off sleep, because the day began to dawn. She sprang out of bed, dressed herself quickly, and ran to the parlour. The whole family was in motion, busily employed dressing and packing up; but Charles did not appear.

Mary ran to rouse the lazy boy, but met him at his room door in a very wretched state; he held his hand to his head

* It was a roe's back, two hares, and a ham.

and sighed piteously. Mary, in a frightened voice, called her mother; and both Mr. and Mrs. Jones ran up, and asked poor Charles what was the matter with him? 'Oh,' said he, 'my pleasure is all over! I have, during the whole night, been tormented with a dreadful toothache; it feels as if my head would burst.'

They all pitied poor Charles; for in such a state it would be dangerous for him to be out long in the air; nor could he enjoy the prospects; and the sight of him, in pain, would disturb the rest of the company, and embitter their pleasure. He asked, indeed, if the excursion could not be put off for a day or two; but that was impossible, because the coach had been ordered over night. The provision had been dressed, and all was ready; so poor Charles must stay at home alone.

The coach came; Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Mary, and little James, who, to render the jaunt more agreeable to the children, had been invited, stepped in, and Charles saw them depart with tears in his eyes. They were all sorry to leave him; and at the end of the street his mother leaned out of the coach, and kissed her hand, to comfort the unlucky sick Charles.

He was very uneasy; and throwing himself on the sofa, groaned with pain. And his anguish was increased by thinking of it, because he had no one to pity or comfort him. His mother, before she set off, desired Catherine to go for William; but he had such a violent cold, his father would not allow him to stir out.

His master soon came to give him his lessons. He consoled him, and said, 'Keep up your spirits, dear Charles; great pain never lasts long; to-morrow, perhaps, you will be quite well again.' These kind words made Charles more tranquil, though his anguish continued. However, when his master perceived that he could not profit by his instructions, the pain was so great, and that the other children were not there, he soon left him alone, and he was now again quite comfortless.

Nevertheless, he did not sit crying all the morning; he thought of the poor man who had the cancer, and bore it patiently, though he could not expect to be better to-morrow.

He tried to imitate him; and towards dinner time the pain actually abated, so that he could dine with Mr. Noel; and, after the meal, it seemed quite gone. Who was then so happy as Charles? He was ready to jump for joy, and had only to seek for amusement to render his solitude supportable. He went first into his father's little study, and sought for a book with pictures in it, to see if he could amuse himself; for his father allowed him to take down the books, on condition that he neither tore nor dirtied them, and carefully replaced them. He soon found, what delighted him, a book full of pictures of animals, and the methods used to catch them. One print represented how they entrapped the elephant; another, how they chased the lion; and, on several others, how they caught and ensnared foxes, hares, partridges, wild ducks, and geese, and many other animals. 'Now,' thought he, 'the time will no more seem long;' and for above a quarter of an hour he thus diverted the lonely moments he was obliged to spend by himself. At last he turned on some prints, which showed him how some people ensnared apes. When the apes were slyly observing the huntsman, he took a basin of water, and washed his face; then he went away, leaving the basin on the ground; but, instead of pure water, he poured thick clayey water into it. As soon as the huntsman's back was turned, the ape crept cautiously forward to wash himself, and plastered his eyes up in such a manner that he could see nothing, and might be caught with very little trouble. This cunning trick made him laugh heartily; and he started up to seek for some one with whom he could talk about the droll looks of the monkey; but no one could he find; no Mary, no James, no William was there, and even Mr. Noel was gone out. He had now no more pleasure in looking at the pictures; and, full of vexation, he shut the book and put it in its place.

Afterwards he thought he would try to play at something. He searched for his ninepins, and set them up, and knocked them down with the ball; but as he had no one to contest with him, he was tired in less than ten minutes.

He gathered his leaden soldiers together, placed them in order; but, when they were placed, he knew no more what

to do with them, and was soon tired of them too. Weary of them and himself, he put them into their box, and sat down to consider what he should do next.

At last he thought of his paints, which had so often amused him when James was with him. He put them on the table, took out the shells, and sought for one of his prettiest prints to colour it. In fact he began to paint the clothes of two persons in the picture, but, when he went on further, he soon remarked that he wanted James, who could paint very well, and knew how to choose the proper colours for every thing. Charles had already met with many parts of the picture he was at a loss how to colour; and, still more dissatisfied than ever, shut up his painting-box. Now he knew no more what to do. Peevishly he threw himself again on the sofa, and lamenting, bitterly lamenting, said, 'How sad is life without a friend! If I suffer, there is no one here to pity or comfort me; no one who would try to soften my pain. If I am pleased, there is no one to communicate it to. If I play, I want a companion; or it is not like play; and if I work, I have no one to help me, or give me good advice! Ah me! if my dear Mary, if William or James were here! Yes, when I am once with them again, I will do all I can to make them love me; I will be very attentive to find out what they like best, and that moment do it; for there is no living without them. Dear Mary! James! William! will you not soon return?'

They heard not the lamentations of the poor solitary Charles; they came not; but, instead of them, a companion he did not find very agreeable, for the toothache returned. Though his mother had often said that it was like a pig to eat cakes or nice things alone, he looked for some almonds covered with sugar, and tried to eat them; but scarcely had he begun to chew with the tooth that had a hole in it, than the pain darted through his whole jaw, and the anguish was greater than ever. He groaned, and would have cried, if he had not thought that a boy should have more courage, and bear pain patiently.

Whilst, almost stunned by his pain, he threw himself from chair to chair, some one knocked at the room door. 'Come

in,' cried he, hoping he should see an acquaintance; but he was deceived, it was only a Jew with a grey beard.'

Ill-humouredly he asked what he wanted?

'Your father,' said he; 'is he not at home?'

'There is nobody at home,' replied Charles, rather rudely, and turned from him.

'Is little master sick?' asked Ephraim, 'that he holds his cheek. Tell me, my little dear, have you any thing the matter with your teeth?'

'Yes, yes,' answered Charles. 'Tell me, master,' continued Ephraim, 'whether there is a hole in your tooth?' Let me look into your mouth, perhaps I can help you.'

Charles was at first rather unwilling; but when Ephraim assured him that he had already cured several people of the toothache, though they were in violent pain, he let him look into his mouth, and Ephraim promised that he would soon bring something from his own house to stop the pain, and make him quite well.

Charles had heard his father say, that when a person is sick, they ought not to take every thing recommended to them as a good remedy; at least whilst they are young and ignorant, and do not know what is good for the human body, and therefore might take something very hurtful and improper; indeed, few understand the nice construction of the human frame; and ignorant people, by prescribing the same remedy for different constitutions, often do much harm.

As soon as the Jew was gone, he went to Mr. Noel and asked whether he might venture to take what the Jew would give him. Mr. Noel inquired directly of the clerks, and some other people who were in the counting-house looking over some goods, what sort of a man Ephraim was? They all gave him a good character; assured him that he was an honest, sensible man; that he had some knowledge of physick, and often cured both Jews and Christians who consulted him when they were sick. Mr. Noel himself then advised Charles to take what he should bring him.

In about half an hour the Jew came back with two little plasters, and put them behind his ears. At the same time

he filled up the hole in his tooth with wax, to preserve it from the cold air, and to prevent his food sticking in it.

But, if Charles had been in pain before, he was now in an agony; it was as if forks were stuck into his jaw. He then grew quite impatient, and would have torn the plasters from behind his ears; but the Jew would not permit him, and said, 'Have a little patience, master; no remedy has an immediate effect. However, to-morrow morning I will call on you again, and my dear little patient will speak in another tone, I am sure.'

Ephraim now left him, reminding him once more not to tear off the plasters.

The pain grew so insupportable, that probably he would have torn them off in spite of his caution, if Mr. Noel had not taken him into his room, and watched him.

Towards the end of an hour, the anguish gradually abated; and at supper he had a little appetite, and relished his food. He went early to bed, and soon fell into a sweet sleep; and as he had rested very little the night before, he slept so fast, that he did not wake before eight o'clock the following morning. And when he awoke, where was the pain gone? He felt no more of it; and how happy did he feel! He ran to Mr. Noel, and said, 'I am quite well; how glad I am that you did not allow me to tear off the plasters. Thank you! thank you!'

He then ran to the window, and looked out every moment, longing to see the dear Jew come. About nine o'clock he came; and the moment Charles caught a glimpse of him, he flew to the street door delighted, and eagerly opened it, to admit the man whom the day before he had received so rudely. He led him into the parlour, saying all the way, 'A thousand, thousand thanks! my dear, good Ephraim, I am quite well, all my pain is gone. I have often been told that the Jews were wicked people, but now I see that I was wrong.'

'It was very wrong, indeed, if little master thought so,' said Ephraim; 'and when he knows more of the Jews, he will see more clearly his mistake. In every religion there are good people. I do not deny but there are many wicked people among our nation, and how many Christians

lie and steal? but we are all men, descended from the same father, and serve the same God; and he who despises his fellow-creatures on account of their being called Jews, flies in the face of his Maker. We are commanded to love all men; we are all brothers, and should only despise those who lie, steal, and commit crimes, which render them useless, if not a pest, to society.'

'But,' continued Charles, 'you cannot say that there are not many cheats among the Jews.'

'I do not pretend to say so,' replied Ephraim; 'there are cheats enough among our nation, and among Christians, for the matter of that; but if our nation cheat, the Christians themselves are the cause of it. They despise us, and do not allow us to gain our livelihood in an honest way. So many ignorant Jews are become cheats, because they think that they live among enemies; but there are many good Jews who tell truth, and give money to the poor; and such men deserve our love, whether they are Jews or Christians.'

Charles perceived that he was wrong in disliking the Jews, and supposing that they were worse than other men; and he promised in future to love them as well as the rest of mankind. Afterwards Ephraim put two fresh plasters behind his ears, and bid him remember that a Jew had felt for him when he was in pain, and treated him like a fellow-creature.

He went away; but his behaviour had won Charles's heart, and from that hour he never spoke disrespectfully of a Jew.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MEANWHILE the coach rolled with all the company towards the village where the Curate lived. Mr. Jones reckoned that they should arrive there by ten o'clock, and they all anticipated the happy hours they expected to enjoy, especially the children, who thought that the horses never went quick enough. Nicholas smacked his whip, and away they went as if they flew. Now all was right; the children clapped their hands, crying, 'Yes, that is charming! Now we shall soon be there!' But, in the midst of their rejoicing,

there was a sudden shock—all were silent—what a pause! The carriage sunk down on one side, James was thrown into Mrs. Jones's lap, her husband fell on Mary, and almost crushed the poor girl to death. 'What has happened?' cried they all; 'what is the matter, Nicholas?' Nicholas got off his box, scratched his head, and said, 'A fine job this is, to be sure!' 'Tell us what has happened,' called out Mr. Jones, hastily. 'Why,' answered Nicholas, 'one of the wheels is off; what do you advise me to do? If I had any one to leave with the horses, I would run to the next village for a blacksmith, to help to mend it.'

Mr. Jones was not of the same opinion. He foresaw that the party would find the time very long, if they had to remain an hour or more still in the coach. He therefore thought it best that Nicholas should stay to take care of the horses, and they themselves would walk to the village to seek for a blacksmith. This proposal pleased them all; and they set off on foot, desiring Nicholas to follow with the coach as soon as he could.

The nearest way was a footpath through a field just sown with wheat, and the children seemed to gain new life when they came out of the coach into the free air. All at once James sprang forward, bent down on the ground, then started up again, threw his hat before as if to catch something, and then darted forward again.

Mary, who was curious to know what he had in his eye, ran after him. At last he caught what he pursued, as Mary came up with him, and both rejoiced at having taken a little prisoner. Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. Jones were in conversation, and did not observe them. However, they were soon obliged to stop, for they heard Mary scream out, in a terrified tone, 'Dear James! ah! do not do it! pray! pray hold your hand!' And these entreaties having no effect, she called to her father and mother for help. Mr. Jones could not imagine what the children were disputing about, but waived his hand for them to come to him. They came, Mary first, quite out of breath. 'Dear father,' said she, 'you do not know what a wicked boy James is! he has just caught a field-mouse, and, for all I can say, will cut its ears and

tail off. The poor mouse! it never did him any harm! He has already opened his knife, only look at him!’ James came up smiling, holding the mouse in one hand, and the knife in the other. ‘What are you going to do?’ asked Mr. Jones.

James. I wish to punish this little thief, who steals the poor farmer’s corn.

Mr. Jones. You are a cruel boy! Fie, for shame! He who can torment a little helpless animal, has certainly a bad heart. He accustoms himself, by degrees, to cruelty; and, at last, he will find a savage joy in it; and, after tormenting animals, will not fail to torment men.

James. But could we not do very well without mice? They are insignificant creatures, who are of no use in the world.

Mr. Jones. And is the watch, which your father has given you, something insignificant?

James. By no means. I would not give it for a thousand mice.

Mr. Jones. Nevertheless, there appears in the structure of this little mouse’s body a thousand times more contrivance than in your watch. Look at this little ear, through which it hears all that passes round it; through this organ it was warned when you pursued it; and these pretty eyes, in which the forms of all the objects before it are painted; and these sharp teeth, with which it can gnaw the hardest grain; and these neatly turned paws; this skin as soft as velvet. But you would be still more astonished if you could see its inside; if you could observe how every thing passes there to preserve life; how the little stomach dissolves the food; how it separates the best juices, and carries them, by very fine channels, still further; how flesh, blood, and bones are formed of them. Put your hand on its breast, and feel how its heart beats to push the blood through the little veins. Your watch may be made very ingeniously; but do you think it would ever produce any little watches? You would be glad of that, for you might soon have plenty of watches to sell, and make your fortune. But to this degree of perfection they can never be carried. The most beautiful things made by man are dead, and without sense; God alone can give life and reason. This mouse has, probably,

already brought many little mice into the world, and will certainly bring forth many more, if you spare its life.

James. Yet, with all this, it is good for nothing.

Mr. Jones. That you cannot certainly know. There are a thousand things in the world very useful, no doubt, yet we do not plainly see their usefulness. If He who made this little mouse, certainly knew that it was good for nothing, why has He employed so much art in making it? However, I can point out to you some things that it is useful in.

Look at that raven, how gravely it stalks; what a beautiful black plumage it has; and those fine feathers, which ornament its wings, are very useful when we wish to write very neatly. For this raven and his brothers are mice sent into the world. They hunt them out; and, when they have caught, they eat them, and find them as relishing as you think roasted hare; therefore mice are of as much use as hares.

James. But still mice do harm; they devour the poor peasant's rye and corn.

Mr. Jones. The injury they do is very trifling. They commonly only gather up the grain which the farmer lets fall; and the most part of it would probably perish if those little notable mice did not carry it to their nests. And supposing they are led by hunger sometimes to steal a couple of ears out of a sheaf of corn, what injury is that? The farmer will never miss it.

James. But I have heard that they sometimes multiply so fast that they often ravaged a whole field.

Mr. Jones. Then, indeed, it is time to destroy them, but without tormenting them; and they should be put to death as quickly as possible. If the torments they suffered would bring back the wheat, or teach them honesty, there would be some excuse for it; but this mouse will not be less a thief after you have cut off its ears and tail.

James. Well, then, I will kill the little thief before he does any more harm.

'Ah! my dear James,' cried Mary, 'do not kill it; give me the little mouse; I pray you give it me! Can you deny me?'

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He gave it to her; and, as soon as she got it, she let it run away, calling after it, 'Run, run, poor animal, till you find again your little children.'

Both Mr. and Mrs. Jones were pleased with her. Mrs. Jones kissed Mary, and said, 'Good girl! you have perhaps saved the lives of four or five little mice, who must have perished with hunger if their mother had been killed.'

Mr. Jones still continued the subject. He said that the smallest animals were of some use, and that a good man ought not to kill the least worm, unless it injured him, or its death would be useful to him. But even in that case, it was unjust and cruel to torment them. He described, in so affecting a manner, what anguish it would have given the poor mouse if he had cut off its ears and tail, that it brought tears into both the children's eyes.

'But is it not very wrong,' said Mary, 'in those wicked butchers to kill the poor sheep? They do no harm!'

'They do no harm,' answered Mr. Jones, 'but their death is advantageous to us; for we eat their flesh, and their wool and skin form the most useful part of our clothing. Some time or other the sheep must die. They crop the grass on which many insects live, and drink the water in which thousands of little living creatures swim. Birds pick up flies and worms, while men are supported by animals, birds, fish, and vegetables. So that the world contains a vast variety of creatures, who are all linked together by mutual wants. The sheep, for a long time, enjoyed content before it was brought to the pen; and, if the butcher kills it quickly, it does not suffer near so much pain as it would do if it died by degrees, of sickness or old age.'

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONVERSING in this manner they reached the village. Mr. Jones inquired for a blacksmith; but the peasants informed him that he was gone to work at the justice's house, which was not far off; and, as he was a very civil gentleman, they were sure that he would allow him to go and assist the coachman the moment he was asked.

Mr. Jones went to the magistrate, and simply told him of their little distress. He instantly permitted the blacksmith to attend him, who went home for his tools and hastened to the coach. Meanwhile the party went to the inn, there to wait for the arrival of the coach.

Though they did not feel anything like hunger, yet Mr. Jones desired the landlord to bring them a little refreshment, that they might make a proper return for sitting in his room.

The landlord, who was playing with some farmers at cards, was so eager about the game, that he did not give himself the least trouble to please his guests. He even seemed vexed that they called for something; rose hastily from the table with an angry countenance, and called up the stairs, 'Mistress, bring some bread and butter for the gentle folks!' Then he quickly seated himself again, caught up the cards, and said, 'Come, deal away.'

His wife brought in the bread and butter, but forgot a knife, so that they could not cut their bread, or spread the butter; and Mr. Jones saw that he must once more interrupt the landlord's game.

He went to him, and tapping him gently on the shoulder, said, 'My friend, we have not a knife.' A run of ill-luck, as it is called, had already made him very unreasonable; and, as if his guests had been the cause of it, he darted a furious look at him, and, springing to the door, asked his wife, with a curse, 'why she had forgotten to bring a knife to the company?'

His trembling wife brought it in a moment; but, as soon as she entered the room, her husband loaded her with abuse, and said, 'You are a fine mistress of an inn, indeed!' throwing the cards at her head. That the poor woman was very much disconcerted, may naturally be supposed. 'You shameless man,' said she, 'is it thus you treat your wife? The whole day must I work like a horse—all the business lies on me; and you—you do nothing else but eat, drink and play; my whole property you have already run through, and now you use me like a dog.' This speech rendered the brutal man still more furious; he ran to seize a

whip which hung against the wall to beat her with; but she, not thinking it prudent to wait for his strokes, flew into the street. A little boy would have followed his mother; but stumbling over something on the floor, began to cry piteously. His father, instead of having any compassion for him, gave him a violent stroke with the whip, and pushing him into the street, banged the door violently to.

The farmers who had been playing with him, shocked at this brutal behaviour, slipped quietly out of the room, and left Mr. Jones and his family alone. The children were half dead with fear, almost afraid to breathe; at last James said, after looking round the room, to be sure that the landlord was quite out of hearing, 'Is not this a very wicked man? I never in my life saw such a one before. Our master has often told us, that we ought to love all men; but surely he did not mean such a rogue as this! I cannot help hating and despising him. What do you think, sir?'

'Do you think,' asked Mr. Jones, 'that a man who, through the negligence of his parents, or thoughtlessness of a maid, was unfortunately made a cripple in his childhood, deserves to be hated?'

'Certainly not,' answered James; 'how could the poor man help it? It would be a great misfortune to be lame—I should pity him and help him, if I could.'

'Yet you dare to hate a wicked man,' interrupted Mr. Jones, 'whom you ought to pity and help, if you could. For a wicked man is much more an object of pity than a cripple. He has, in general, caught his bad habits from his parents, or those whom he has lived with. When these habits have been fixed thirty or forty years, it is often as difficult to overcome them as to make a contracted limb straight. And, dear James, believe me, a wicked man suffers more than the most miserable cripple! Why then should we not pity him? I will now speak to the landlord; and you shall hear, out of his own mouth, that he deserves compassion.'

'Oh! pray do not, dear sir,' cried James; 'leave the wicked man alone, he will only vex you;' and Mrs. Jones and Mary joined in the entreaties; but Mr. Jones silenced

them by saying, 'that we ought not to be too careful of ourselves when we wish to do good; however, do not be uneasy about me; I am master of my temper, and humanity requires that I should give some good counsel to this poor man.'

The landlord now entered, with marks of fury still on his face.

'Where is the child?' asked Mr. Jones; 'I hope it is not hurt?'

'Hurt, indeed,' answered the landlord; 'what harm could come to it? The brat will live long enough; ill weeds seldom perish.'

Mr. Jones. So he is not your son?

Landlord. Why, whose should he be?

Mr. Jones. If he is, honest friend, pray tell me how a father could treat so barbarously his own child? The child did nothing wrong, he fell by chance; and, because he was hurt by the fall, began to cry; and instead of pitying it, as you ought to have done, you gave it a blow.

Landlord. You speak just like our parson; he often comes to preach a sermon to me when I have given my wife a black eye. But, sir, you do not know where the shoe pinches; if you did but know how many cares I have, you would not wonder if I sometimes fly into a passion.

Mr. Jones. And how came you to be so full of cares? You seem to have a good house, well situated for custom, an honest wife, and healthy children.

Landlord. You speak as if you knew all about it. If you were in my situation, if you had a wife who every day reproached you for squandering away her fortune, if all your children cared more for their mother than for you, and if you were afraid every day of being dragged to prison by your creditors, you would sing in another tone. You know not where the bone sticks. It is true my house has tolerable custom; but half a mile from thence lives a droll rogue, who talks over all the farmers; so they drink their ale with him, while mine grows sour in the cask.

Mr. Jones. If it is so, indeed you are to be pitied; but do not take ill what I am going to say. It appears to me as if

all your misfortunes were owing to yourself. If you have squandered away your wife's fortune, is it to be wondered at that she reproaches you? And if you beat your children without a cause, is it not natural that they should love their mother better than you? As for your creditors, you would not have them to be afraid of, if you were not in debt. If you had properly managed your wife's fortune, and minded your business, you needed not have run in debt, and might have lived quietly in your own house, where no one would have dared to molest you. If your children fly from you, and your neighbours let your ale grow sour, is it not all your own fault? Your ill humour frightens them away. Who will stay in a house with a man who takes so little pains to please, raises such a riot in the house, beats his wife, and kicks his children? And, Mr. Landlord, I must tell you freely my determination. If you do not alter your behaviour, I will never come to your house again.

Landlord. As to that, I believe I wish to be civil, yet I cannot help being angry when things go cross; for my father was passionate, my brother was passionate. I really think I shall always remain so: it has run in our blood such a long time.

Mr. Jones, after having given some good advice, paid for his bread and butter, and got into the coach, which had already waited a few minutes for them. They were all glad to get away from this angry man; but Mr. Jones said to James, 'Do you not now see how much this man deserves your pity? No one loves him, every creature despises him; and if he thinks of his former life, or his future prospects, he finds no satisfaction. And the first cause of his misery was this, from his infancy he was brought up by wicked men, and was always with them. Did you not hear him say that both his father and brother were passionate?'

James felt the truth of the observation, and sincerely pitied the miserable wretch who destroyed all his own comfort.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THEY now came to the village where the Curate lived. Mr. Jones ordered the coachman to go directly to his house. The children jumped for joy, it was almost impossible to keep them any longer quiet; they knelt upon the seat and waited full of impatience for the moment when the Curate, with his children, should come out and embrace them. After a few moments the coach stopped, and the children asked Mr. Jones whether this was the house? 'Yes,' answered he, 'there stands the house which you have so long desired to see.' They danced with delight. 'But is it not wonderful,' said Mr. Jones, 'that no one comes out to receive us? I hope they are not from home.'

He got out of the coach, and helped his wife and children out, but still no one appeared. He went through the front garden; there was no living soul to be seen. He entered the house; still he saw nobody. He tapped at the chamber-door. 'Come in,' cried a weak voice. They opened the door. Heavens, what a sight! There stood four beds and a cradle. George sat on one, and in the other lay Henry and little Caroline. In the third lay the Curate's wife, and the fourth seemed to be destined for the Curate. An infant was sleeping in a cradle. In the little corner which still remained sat the Curate, with his head leaning on his hand. And when the guests had entered the chamber, they had scarcely room to move. 'My dear sir,' cried the Curate, in a plaintive voice, 'Why do you come into this melancholy place? I am almost overcome by misery. There lie my poor children in the small-pox.* George is almost out of danger; but my dear Henry—my sweet little Caroline (here a tear stole down his cheek)—see, have I not cause to lament? There they lie in burning fever. Their eyes have been closed already three days. Alas! and I know not whether they will ever open them again. There too lies my dear wife. It is only a few days since that

* Scarlet fever in the original.

infant was born, and she is so weak that she can scarcely sit up in bed. The poor woman can scarcely endure so much pain. As for me, it is almost a fortnight since I have had any sleep. But, alas! not two, but many weeks would I watch. I would gladly endure all, if I could only save the lives of my children. If I could but once see them well again! My poor darlings, my Henry! my Caroline!

Mr. Jones interrupted him by catching his hand, on which the big silent tear dropped. They were all extremely affected, and James and Mary wept aloud.

'Dearest friend,' continued the Curate, 'what can I do with you? I cannot even offer you a chair. I have nobody that can dress you a bit of meat, and if I had, you could not relish it in this hospital. Were I to take you into the parlour, I could not be with you. I cannot leave my sick children. Do not take it ill of me, for if the bishop came I could not wait on him. For if one of my children should die, who could make me amends for its loss? Leave then, I pray you, this dismal abode, and go to the inn. The landlord is a very honest man, and I hope he will make a point of treating you well.'

Mr. Jones now tried to comfort him as well as he could, and said, among other things, 'Take courage, your sorrow will give way to joy: after a hard winter follows a cheerful spring.'

Mrs. Jones seated herself near Mrs. Benson's bed, and tried to comfort her, even while she herself shed many tears.

James and Mary crept to the sick children's pillow, and told them how they pitied them.

They then all took a mournful leave of this distressed family, and went to the inn.

They had very little appetite for their meal: they ate a few bits hastily, and drank a glass or two of wine; but they sent the hamper to the Curate, begging him to accept of it, and drink a little more than usual, that he might be able to bear his watching and distress. After two hours had passed away in compassionate complaints, Mr. Jones said to his family, 'It is very pleasant to visit our friends when all goes well, and they are happy; but it is still better to succour them when they are in trouble. Come, let us go again to them and try as much as is possible to soften their distress.'

I will converse with the Curate; you, my dear, may chat with his wife; and do you children gather all the little presents together that you have brought with you, and carry them to your sick playmates. Those good people will be pleased when they see that we take a part in their sorrow.' They were all content, and Mrs. Jones desired the landlady to provide them with a supper, and give the broken victuals which they had brought with them to the poor. They only took the fowls with them, thinking that the sick might like to taste them.

They all hurried away, and when they entered the sick room, the poor patients seemed for a time to have forgotten their sufferings.

Mr. Jones seated himself near the Curate, and endeavoured by his conversation to raise his spirits. He related how much his children had suffered in the small-pox, and dwelt on the danger they were in; yet he was able to say that they had happily gone through it all. During this conversation, the Curate in some measure recovered his usual cheerfulness.

Mrs. Jones drew near to his wife, who was suckling her child, which made her feel so much pain in her breast that she pressed her teeth together to avoid crying out. Mrs. Jones, in a tone of compassion, told her how much she had endured with a bad breast, and pointed out the remedy which had softened her pain. Mrs. Benson listened attentively, pressed her hand, and said, 'Dear friend, you are an angel whom God has sent to give me strength to bear my sufferings. My heart is grown lighter since you came here.'

Mary and James went first to the bed where Henry and Caroline lay, and gave them some pretty playthings which they had brought for them. Mary had got for Caroline a little set of household furniture, flasks, porringers, spoons, knives, tea-cups, &c. James put in order before Henry a whole company of leaden dragoons. But what comfort was this to the poor children? they could see nothing of them; and when they attempted to grasp them, the festered pimples on their hands gave them so much pain, that they immediately threw them all down and began to weep. But James spoke very kindly to them, and said that they should try to

be quiet, and then they would soon be well, and that he would give the little presents into their father's care; and how great would be their joy when they left their beds and found these pretty toys.

Afterwards they went to George. He was more cheerful, because he was growing well, and he laughed outright when James gave him a whole hunt, huntsmen and dogs, stags, boars, and foxes, all formed in lead; and Mary spread before him some pretty pictures which she had brought. They soon got acquainted with each other, and chatted very familiarly.

'Dear playfellows,' said George, 'I never thought before how good it is of parents to be so anxious about their children. See now how much my mother endures with that little infant. As often as it sucks it gives her as much pain as if a knife was stuck in her breast; and still she does not send it away. She puts it again to the breast, bears all the pain, rather than the poor infant should feel hunger. Ah! if she was to forsake it, it would soon die. She washes it every morning, and puts clean clothes on it several times in the day; and when she dresses it, she touches it so tenderly, and hold its head against her breast, watching that nothing injures its weak limbs. At night she scarcely sleeps two hours, because the child often weeps, and seems always to look to her for help. We have all been such little creatures, and given our good parents as much trouble.

'And my good father, you cannot think how dearly he loves us; since we have been sick, he has not left our beds. The squire has twice invited him to supper; but he always refused, because he would not leave us. How many times has he got out of bed in the cold; how many nice bits has he put into my mouth; and how many spoonfuls of medicine has he given me, with his own hand, which cooled my poor heart. Every day he sends to the doctor's for something which costs him money; but he says he does not mind any expense if he could but see us in health once more. I love our dear parents; I ought to love them. I will do more; I will try to be good that they may find pleasure in me. What wicked children must they be who can vex their

parents!’ Whilst he was speaking in this manner, Mary and James were thinking of their parents; and both determined that they would follow the example of George. Mary recollected, with sincere regret, that she had sometimes vexed hers; and James was ashamed of himself that he had not before reflected how much trouble and care he had already given his. Both were, from this time, more attentive to their conduct; and did everything, when they were with their parents, to please them; and were as careful when they were absent to obey their commands, as when they were under their eye.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE day beginning to close, the company took leave of the suffering family, wished them a quiet night; and that, after having overcome so much sorrow, they might again feel joy.

They now returned to the inn, and would have entered the first room they came to; but the hostess ran up to them, saying, ‘Pray do not go in there, it is so close to the kitchen, where some travellers are smoking and drinking, that I fear you will find the noise very disagreeable. If you wish to be at your ease, you had better come into the little parlour where my children sit; you will find a good fire there, and I will go and make the fire burn above-stairs, for we did not expect you so soon.’ They followed her, and found every thing in good order. They did not see, indeed, great glasses, pictures, or any other kind of costly furniture; but every thing spoke the industry of these good people. The wall was hung with skeins of yarn, spindles ready to be reeled, and stockings with knitting-needles in them. There stood a wheel, here winders; and on a little shelf stood some useful books. A girl of sixteen, and another of fourteen, were cutting bread, and putting little pats of butter on a plate for the supper of the family that now entered. A third girl was spinning, and a boy sat writing at a table.

This sight afforded Mrs. Jones great pleasure. ‘I find,’ said she, ‘that there are still very industrious people in the

world.' 'When we have only a desire to work,' answered the hostess, 'we shall always find something to do ; and there is no pleasure like employment. Besides, if my children had not always sufficient work to do, they would stand staring in the public room, where they could neither see nor hear anything good. But, excuse me, at this hour I have a great deal to do in the kitchen.'

She went out, and the host entered, a cheerful healthy-looking man, with honesty sparkling in his eyes. He had in his arms his youngest child ; and, approaching his little guests, shook them cordially with his right hand ; which labour had so hardened that it felt like leather. 'To-day,' said he, smiling, 'I am nurse. My wife and all my people have their hands so full of work, that they could not hold the poor little bantling, so I must take care of it. But I do not complain, I have still a hand free and ready to obey your orders. We must all help one another, if we wish to live happily together.' At this instant he was called, and the company were left alone with the children.

Mrs. Jones seated herself by the tallest of the girls, and asked if she was the host's eldest daughter? 'I am not his daughter,' answered the smiling girl; 'I am only his niece, my mother was his sister. But I have no parents, they are both dead ; and he has brought me up ever since my sixth year.' 'But I suppose he is paid for your board?' said Mrs. Jones. 'I have,' answered she, 'not a penny to give him; for my parents left nothing behind them. But he is a very good man, he treats me like his own children ; I dress like them, and he never buys a new thing for them without remembering me. He has had me taught to sew, knit, and spin ; and even paid the schoolmaster for teaching me to write and cypher. He has put my brother 'prentice to a tailor, and provides every thing for him.' 'You are, indeed,' said Mrs. Jones, 'fallen into the hands of a good man.' 'Yes; that is true enough,' continued the girl; 'but the good that he has done for us poor motherless children is not all. If I was to relate what he does for other poor people, I should not finish before night. When a poor traveller comes to seek for a lodging he takes him in, and, the next morning, will not

take anything for his bed ; nay, sometimes he will give him something to help him on his way.

‘Yesterday evening came a poor soldier’s widow here with her three children ; her husband had not long been dead. If you will believe me, he had a good fire lighted for her in the room in which you are going to sit, and he treated her as he did the other guests, who were gentlefolks. The poor woman would scarcely eat of the good supper he provided, and said that she had not above a shilling in her pocket. “Never mind that,” said he, “do you and your children only eat your supper with a good appetite.” In the morning our boy was to carry some corn to market ; but I could not guess why he got so often in and out of the cart. At last I found out that he had been making a seat of dry straw for the woman and her children, and only put two sacks in to lie at their feet. He not only took nothing from her, but asked my aunt to look for some old clothes, which he gave to the woman for her children, helped them into the cart, and off they set for the city. I shall never, during my life, forget how the woman called out a hundred times from the cart that God would return it to him.’

‘It gives me pleasure to hear all this,’ said Mrs. Jones ; ‘but I have heard him accused of enticing all the farmers to his house ; yet I can scarcely believe it.’

‘There is something in it, however,’ answered the girl. ‘When any one sleeps here once, they will be sure to come again, if they travel this way ; nay, I have known some travellers go on an hour or two after it grows dark to rest here. But there is nothing wrong in all this, he is so civil to everybody. He always take care that the bread, beer, and meat, is good ; and, when he is to be paid, he does not overcharge anybody. Is it to be wondered at that he pleases people?’

Mr. Jones heard, with astonishment, this girl’s discourse, who, with the greatest simplicity, in a few minutes, related of a man, in a mean condition, more good than many rich men do in the whole course of their lives. He could not any longer remain silent, but said to his family, ‘O, dear children, see how much good a single good man can do ! His wife,

four of his own children, and two whom he has adopted—seven persons have to thank him for their whole comfort and joy. How miserable would they be if he was as careless as the angry man we saw this morning? How many poor will he have been a comfort to? What a number of fatigued and wayworn travellers will, in his house, spend a comfortable evening, and gather new strength. If now a man in a situation reckoned mean can do so much good to others, how much more should be expected from one in an elevated rank?’

Whilst he was speaking, the honest innkeeper entered, and asked if they would please to go upstairs, saying, ‘the room is warm, and the supper on the table.’

The whole company stood up, and looked at him with silent respect, as if a nobleman had entered. Mary quickly hung on his arm, and James would gladly have caught the other, if the sweet babe had not already been enfolded in it; he therefore followed, holding Mr. Jones’s hand.

Mrs. Jones was last; and, when she came to the room-door, she turned back, saying, ‘she should soon come to them.’ Scarcely was the door shut, when she went towards the industrious little people, tenderly embracing them one after the other, and said, ‘Good children, follow the example of your father and uncle, and I promise you all will go well.’ She then joined her family in the other room.

It was small and low, with little doors and windows, but still they were all pleased with it. The wainscot-table was covered with a clean cloth and plates and dishes, which looked equally neat: it is true, the spoons were not silver, nor the knives very handsome; but everything was well dressed, and the honest host who chatted with them, and the ruddy girl who waited, pleased them all. When they went to rest they found clean beds; and, in the morning, a good breakfast.

After this cheerful repast, Mr. Jones went himself, once more, to see the Curate, and to inquire how he and his family found themselves. He soon came back, and brought the agreeable news that they had all slept well, and that he found the sick much better than they were the evening

before; at the same time, he added, that the Curate, with his wife and children, had promised to visit them as soon as they were well.

Nicholas must now harness his horses, and the host was desired to bring in his bill. He soon brought it; and it was so reasonable, that Mr. Jones could not imagine how the innkeeper, without injuring himself, could have regaled them at so cheap a rate. He shook his head, and said, 'Friend, there must be some mistake in the reckoning.' 'I believe not,' said the host, a little astonished, taking the bill to look over it again. However, Mr. Jones did not wait for it, but pressing something into his hand, there is the amount of the reckoning. He then, turning to his wife and children, desired them to be quick and get into the coach. 'What are you thinking of, sir?' cried the host. 'Why, heaven help me, you have given me five guineas!' Mr. Jones, turning half round, smiled on him, and said, 'If there is more than your due, you know how to use it; when a poor soldier's wife and her children come to lodge with you; when an orphan wants clothing or a 'prentice-fee.'

The host would still have raised some difficulties, but Mr. Jones was so full of respect for this good man, that he shook him heartily by the hand, sprang into the coach, and away it rolled; the children still crying out, 'Good bye! good bye, Mr. Host!' and when he could no longer hear them, they still fondly shook their heads and hands at him.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE horses must have fared as well in the inn as the rest of the party. They snorted the fresh air, and were so lively, that the coachman could scarcely hold them in. They went on at such a rate that they were all pleased with the quick motion. They continued this pace for above half an hour, when the coachman was obliged to halt because the road lay up a hill, and Mr. Jones wished to get out, that he might have a more extensive view of the beautiful country which the hill commanded. When they had gained the rising ground he stepped in again, and the travellers went

on as quick as before. They saw already, afar off, the steeples of the city; but their distance made them appear, to Mary, not bigger than a span, so that she could scarcely believe that they were the great steeples of the city. But Mr. Jones assured her that she would see them grow larger and larger as she advanced; and they would soon have seen them near enough to judge of their true height, if a fresh accident had not retarded their progress.

Some part of the harness gave way, and Nicholas was near half an hour before he could get it into order again. During that time Mr. Jones walked, with his children, by the fields, and made them observe the beautiful verdure of the rising corn which decked the fields, and had attained sufficient strength to endure the rigour of the approaching winter. As they were stepping into the carriage again, they heard, at a distance, a voice cry, 'Stop, stop!' They turned round, and saw a girl running towards them, who made signs, and showed them something which she held in her hand. Mr. Jones went to meet her. She came up to him quite out of breath, with a purse in her hand, and said, 'Have you not lost this, sir? I saw you get into the coach, and found it yonder, where you were walking just now.' Mr. Jones felt for his purse, and perceived indeed that he had lost it. There were four guineas in it, and a great deal of silver. He wondered at the honesty of the girl, whom, by her dress, he supposed to be very poor. He stroked her cheeks, asked who were her parents? whether she had any brothers and sisters? and what she had to do in the fields?

'I have only an old mother,' replied the girl, 'and she is very poor. For above a year she has been tormented by the rheumatism, and has not been able to do any work. We have nothing to live on but what I earn by spinning. I came out now to seek for some wood, that I might make her a little broth; and I come every day to gather a few sticks together, that we may have something in the winter to keep ourselves warm with.'

'And why, then,' asked Mr. Jones, 'did you not keep this money? You might have maintained your poor mother a long time with it.'

'God keep me,' exclaimed the girl, 'from doing such a thing! I knew very well that the money belonged to you; and, if I had kept it, it would have been just the same as if I had stolen it. I should have been finely received by my mother, if I had carried her heaps of money gotten in this way.'

Mr. Jones then put his hand into his purse, probably to seek for a guinea; but his wife held it, and said, 'Will you permit me to reward this good girl? her honesty has gained my entire confidence. If you will allow me, I will take her home with me, and teach her every kind of household labour; in time she may become my cook, and take care of my storeroom. I perceive that I can trust this honest girl, and I have long wished for such a person in my house.' She obtained, as may easily be supposed, her husband's consent, and asked the girl whether she was willing to come and live with her? promised her that she should have enough to eat and drink, and new clothes; and she should be treated, in every respect, very kindly. The girl, astonished at this offer, wept, clasped her hands, and said, 'Ah, kind madam! I would gladly go with you; but what would become of my poor mother? If I left her, she would die of hunger.' 'I will take care of that,' said Mr. Jones; 'I will have her carried to a house where she will find a warm room, and enough to eat and drink. Take, for the present, this money, and buy some meat to make broth for your mother; and ask her whether she will let you live with us, and accept of the provision we offer her. Next week I will send for you both; tell me exactly where you live?'

The girl looked at what Mr. Jones had given her, the moment she quitted them. 'Good gracious!' cried she, 'how much money! half a guinea, a crown, and several shillings.' She counted it over and over again; she had never in her life had half so much before. She ran as quickly as she possibly could to show it to her mother, saying to herself, all the way she went, 'Yes, this is well; it was well I did not keep the money. How my poor mother will be pleased when I bring her all this!'

She now came to the house, laid the money on the table,

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X

and said, 'There, mother! there is a heap of money, which is all my own, and I am now going to make you some nice broth. A great lord gave it to me; he lost a purse full of gold; I really believe there was a thousand guineas in it; I found it, and he gave me his handful of money out of it for my honesty; He had with him a beautiful good-natured lady, I cannot tell you how good-natured she was; she said that I should come and live with her; that she would give me new clothes; and that you should be brought to a house where you will find every thing you want. Next week they are to send for us; will you come with me, dear mother?' The poor sick woman held up her hands towards Heaven, and prayed (shedding tears of joy) that God would bless those charitable people.

The next week a man came for them. The woman was placed in a comfortable almshouse, where she was to be maintained all her life. Mrs. Jones brought up the honest girl, who soon became an excellent cook; married, some years after, an honest working man, and led a very contented life. Mr. Jones and family now approached the city; and Mary saw that the little spikes, which she had seen at a distance, were indeed steeples; and she was not a little surprised at it. They now spoke of nothing but Charles and his toothache; and Mrs. Jones felt her heart beat when she thought on the sad state in which they should probably find him. But how great was her joy when they came to the house and saw Charles himself, full of health and spirits, springing out to meet them. She and his father embraced him, and Mary and James did the same. As soon as Mr. Jones heard that the Jew Ephraim had cured him of his toothache, he became dear to him, and he was not slow in testifying his gratitude.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MR. JONES'S principal merchandise chiefly consisted of woollen cloths and stuffs, for which purpose he had established a manufactory, and consequently employed a number of women and children to spin the wool, whose labours kept

many looms in motion to weave it into cloth. By those employments he maintained above three hundred people.

The day of his return was Saturday, when all the men, women, and children, who worked for him, always came to receive the money which they had earned during the week. About six o'clock the house resembled a fair, there was such a concourse of people. Mr. Jones used to seat himself at a table, on which lay two or three bags of money, and called them one after the other, made each of them show his account, which he examined with them, and paid them what they had earned. The people who received the money behaved very differently: some went out with an air of stupefied indifference; others murmured, and said that it was much too little, and that they could not subsist on it; but many received their wages with a cheerful countenance, thanked Mr. Jones, and said 'that they would drink his health to-morrow.'

A certain weaver attracted Mr. Jones's attention; he was one of the first who came into the room, yet stood still without having approached to receive his wages. He placed himself near Mr. Jones, with the forefinger of his right hand resting against his nose, and observed, very thoughtfully, how Mr. Jones told out his money. Sometimes he smiled, and sometimes shook his head. At last Mr. Jones asked him what he was thinking of, and if he did not wish for his wages? 'I will wait for it,' answered he, 'if you will continue to reckon with the people. It rejoices me to see that you have so much money to pay, and I think how happy it is that there are rich men in the world. How many people do you now give bread to for the whole week, and many a bit of roast meat for a Sunday. I really know not how all the people in the world would live, if there were not rich men to set them to work. They could not buy wool, and if sometimes they got a few pence, and could keep life and soul together while they spun it, or made it into cloth, they would lose half their time in going about to sell it, and at last, perhaps, be obliged to let some hard-hearted man have it, who, taking advantage of their poverty, would just give them enough to buy the bread their children

might be crying for. But now they want nothing ; neither wool nor work, all the week ; and are sure of receiving their wages when Saturday night comes.'

Mr. Jones looked at him with surprise, and the weaver, who observed that his discourse pleased him, continued : 'There are indeed many who grudge the rich their money, and see, with an envious eye, that they have such beautiful houses, such fine clothes, and keep such good tables. But I always scold them, and say, "You are very foolish people, who cannot see a bit further than your nose. The rich cannot eat their gold, and if they build beautiful houses, lay out fine gardens, buy grand clothes, and fare better than we can, why, they must always give money for what they get, and then it goes through a number of hands. The butcher, the baker, the carpenter, the mason, the smith, the farrier, the glazier, the shoemaker, and all the rest of us, profit by them; or how would these people live, if there were no men who had money to spend?" I know, indeed, that nobody gains a farthing from some of the rich ; by their good-will they are always scraping more and more money together, only to hoard it up. But happily there are not many such in the world.' Mr. Jones admired this rational man's discourse, paid him his wages, and advised him always to try to think in this manner ; for such a contented mind would make his little repast taste better than the dainties of the hard-hearted rich, and he would lead a much happier life than those who continually viewed, with an envious eye, the good fortune of their superiors.

Scarcely was this weaver gone out of the room than another drew near, who whispered Mr. Jones in the ear, that 'the man, who had just left him, was a sharp hand !' 'How so?' asked Mr. Jones. 'He is a choice knave,' answered he ; 'if you knew how he has already deceived you, you would certainly not give him a shuttle-full more work.' Mr. Jones expressed his surprise at this information, and desired him to wait till he had paid all the workmen, when he would speak with him more about the matter.

In the course of half an hour, Mr. Jones found himself alone with the weaver. 'Now, honest man,' asked he, 'what

more have you to say to me?' 'I only say this, that Master Jackson, who has been talking so finely to you, is a knave. I do not like to speak ill of any body, still what is true ought to be told. And it is not proper that I should see such a good master cheated, without telling him of it. His wife sells one piece of stuff after another, which her husband has spun from the wool that he cheats you of, I suppose. For where else could it come from? He is always buying new clothes. Last week he had a new coat made; I cannot do thus, yet I never sit with my hands across.'

Mr. Jones looked at this man with a penetrating eye, and asked with a firm tone, 'Is all this true?' He cast his eyes down and answered, 'To be sure it is true; if it had not been so I should not have said it.' 'And to whom did his wife sell the stuff?' continued Mr. Jones. 'That I cannot exactly tell,' replied the weaver; 'but you may be perfectly satisfied it is so, or I should not have said it. I would not for all the world tell you an untruth.'

Mr. Jones let him go, and promised that he would look carefully into the affair; and he really did sift the business thoroughly. He mentioned to his wife what this man had said of Jackson, and from that hour she took various methods to discover the truth.

She weighed the wool and the yarn, and measured the stuff with the same exactness, comparing his work with that of the other journeymen. After she had watched thus carefully, a whole month, she came to her husband and said, 'Would you think it, that of all our journeymen the most honest is Jackson. I have now for a sufficient length of time observed his work, weighed, measured, and compared it with what has been done by the rest of the people we employ, and found that his was always wove in the best manner, the quantity equal, and often more than was brought home by the others who had the same materials given to them. On the contrary, the man who slandered him is a rogue, his stuff always wants a yard or two, and I have found out the place where, the day before yesterday, he certainly sold a dozen yards.' 'I am glad you have made this discovery,' said Mr. Jones.

The calumniator was soon called, upbraided with his wickedness, and his work taken from him.

Jackson was then sent for, and Mr. Jones said to him, 'Friend, you have been a common journeyman long enough; you deserve a more profitable employment; I will make you overseer of my manufactory; you will have less work to do, and will gain more money. Be but as faithful an overseer to me as you have been a weaver, and I shall be content.'

The joy this unexpected offer gave the honest man may easily be supposed. He held up his hands and said, 'Is it possible! How is all this come about?' 'You may thank Ned Sly for it,' said Mr. Jones.

'Master Sly, Master Sly, who would have thought it,' said Jackson; 'I always supposed that man owed me a grudge, but now I see I wronged him.' 'You have not wronged him,' continued Mr. Jones. 'Sly is a wicked man; he complained to me of you as if you were a cheat, and purloined part of the yarn I gave you to weave. I did not know enough of you, for how can I know all the people who work for me? But from that time I have been very attentive: I have carefully measured and weighed all that you have done, and discovered that you were the most honest and industrious of all my journeymen.' Tears of joy started into Jackson's eyes; he thankfully pressed Mr. Jones's hand, and said, 'I see now come to pass what my poor dead father continually used to say to me: "Jack, always stick to honesty, and then your most spiteful enemies may contribute, without thinking of it, to your happiness."'

He returned to his house, and carried this news to his wife and children. It is easy to suppose what joy he spread among them.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THIS act of justice afforded Mr. Jones sincere pleasure. At dinner he could talk of nothing but honest Jackson, and assured his family that he was better pleased at having become acquainted with his real worth, and that he had it in his power to reward him, than if he had gained a thousand

pounds in trade. He still continued to talk of honesty, and added, 'that an honest man was always happier than a knave. Had Jackson cheated me,' continued Mr. Jones, 'he would not have gained as much as he has now by his honesty. He was very right when he said that the very enemies of an honest man often labour to promote his fortune, because they speak ill of him, which contributes to make other people more attentive to his conduct, and they discover the good qualities which a modest man is not eager to bring forward to notice.'

At the end of a fortnight another cause of joy occurred, which gave them even more pleasure. Mr. Jones stood at the window chatting with his children, suddenly Mary cried out, 'Father, father! look, look! what is that coming up the street? a whole cart full of people. I really believe it is the Curate and all his family.' In a moment Charles's head was out of the window. 'It is, it is, indeed! There is dear Mrs. Benson, there is George and Henry.' Mr. Jones was soon convinced that it was them. Now there was a tumult of joy throughout the whole house, every one calling out 'Here comes the Curate! here comes the Curate!' The door was opened, the guests stepped out, all fresh and in health. But at first they could not say much; they were so starved with cold that they could only bring out, as they tripped into the house, 'How cold it is! how dreadfully cold!' Mr. Jones desired his servant to take care of their horse, and then followed his guests into a warm room.

The dear travellers thought it very pleasant to come from the frozen fields into such a comfortable room, and be received by such friendly people. Mr. Jones and his children helped them to take off their great coats and cloaks, with which they had muffled themselves; and Mrs. Jones ordered some good chocolate to refresh her friends, whose teeth still chattered with cold. Half an hour passed before they were sufficiently recovered to enter into any regular conversation, and it was not till after they had drank two cups of chocolate that they began to converse. They drew their chairs nearer to each other, and Mr. Noel, who came to ask a question, was requested to make one of the party.

'Now, my dear friend,' said Mr. Jones, 'tell us what has happened to you since we left your house; did the dismal days of sickness long endure?'

The Curate related very circumstantially how much they had afterwards suffered; but assured them, at the same time, that they had never in their lives been better than they were at present. 'The danger,' continued he, 'of losing my wife and children, who are my only treasure, made me very sad; but I have myself experienced, that there is nothing more true than what I have often preached to my parishioners, that sorrow is very beneficial. As long as it endures, it indeed occasions us trouble and pain; but when it is past, we may plainly see the great advantages procured by it. I cannot express to you how contentedly we all now live. Our children always loved us, because we ever treated them with tenderness; but when they, in their sickness, saw how careful we were of them, how much we suffered on their account, they then first discovered the full extent of our affection, and are now so disposed to do every thing which we desire, that we could not wish for better children. And even my wife and I love each other much better since we have learned in the sick chamber how absolutely necessary we are to each other. I myself have been very much improved by it, have become more mild and forbearing; formerly, I cannot deny it, I was a little hasty.' 'Well, well,' answered his wife, holding up her finger with an arch look; 'do not tell of yourself.' 'Formerly,' continued he, 'I was indeed too hasty; I must acknowledge it; and I too easily became angry when any little unlucky accident happened in the family; but now how insensibly have I been taught patience, by the anxiety which I felt watching at the side of the sick bed. When one of them cried, "Oh, father, I am so thirsty;" another, "I must sit up;" a third, "Oh, my head! my head! it does so ache!" When the infant cried, and the mother groaned, then I learned to be patient, then I learned to give soft words. Now, I should certainly not so easily be made angry by any unlucky accident. And how much more have I learned; I know now how we ought to nurse the sick, and how to treat children who have the smallpox. Since the illness of my children I

have been called in by all the peasants, whose children were sick of the smallpox. I gave them the good advice which I had gleaned from experience, and have been so lucky as to save the lives of many children, who laid in a very dangerous state, and the eyes of one ; all which I should not have been able to have done, if my own sufferings had not taught me.

‘If we had no sorrow, we should be so accustomed to the comforts of life that we should no more think of their real value, or enjoy the days of health and peace ; but when, now and then, a day or week of anguish and distress comes, we really rejoice in the pleasant days that follow. Yes, how good does this chocolate taste in the company of such dear friends, and with my beloved family, who seemed to be snatched from the grave. I should not have felt the pleasure I now do, if I had never known sorrow. It is with sorrow as with the winter ; whilst it endures it is very disagreeable ; but, when it is over, it adds to the beauty and freshness of spring.’

‘You have observed very justly, dear Curate,’ said Mr. Noel ; ‘for in my youth I had few real cares or sorrows, everything went on as I could wish ; but I am ashamed of myself when I look back, when I reflect what a man I have been. I did, at the moment, whatever pleased my foolish fancy : I was proud, without pity, and treated poor people as if they were no better than brutes. I was a tyrant to my servants, and used them ill for the least oversight. Employment was a thing I never thought of ; I did nothing but drink, eat, dance, and play, walk about, ridicule people, and sleep. It is only since my sufferings began, since I have endured poverty, hunger, and contempt, that I have become prudent and virtuous. O how useful ! how useful has sorrow been to me !’

In such friendly conversations, a great part of the day passed away insensibly. About three o’clock the Curate stood up, and taking his great coat, looked as if he meant, with his family, now to bid them adieu. But they all gathered round him, and opposed his departure. Mrs. Jones entreated, her husband represented that the days were now short, and

that it was dangerous to travel at night ; as for Charles and Mary, they even used force, holding the great coat that he might not put it on. At last his own family deserted him, and joined in entreating him to stay. The children lamented and kissed his hand ; he took refuge with his wife, and begged her to stand by him ; but she made the matter worse. ' I think, my dear,' said she, ' we may as well stay ; we have left such orders at home, that all will go well, though we should not return to-night.' There was then a general expression of joy. The Curate saw himself overcome, and was obliged to give up the great coat which the little folks held so fast. Having gained their point, they sprang joyfully from him, and locked it up carefully in a closet.

CHAPTER XL.

AFTER the children had been some time in the room, they ran into the yard to amuse themselves with sliding. They had two little sledges with which they were allowed to play, as long as the yard was covered with snow. The rough wind that had whistled in the morning was now laid, and the weather became quite mild. The children exercised themselves so much by dragging the sledges, that they did not feel the cold, and were perfectly happy. The day now began to close, and they resolved to return to the company ; but, before they quitted the yard, a pleasant thought came into Charles's head. He saw the pleasure cart in which the Curate and his family came ; he got into it, begging his little playmates to follow him. They did not require many entreaties, and were soon seated ; and then Charles made a motion as if he drove the horse on. ' Jehu, jehu !' cried he, ' that we may soon arrive at George's house.' But there was no horse to receive encouragement from Charles ; the cart did not move an inch from the place. Upon this the whole party burst out a laughing, and got out again.

Their little driver followed them, though he could scarcely laugh with them. ' Could I but once have a ride in such a cart, dear me, how pleasant that would be !' ' Do you really,'

said George, 'wish to go? If you do, I will run directly to my father, and beg him to let the horse be put to. There is the cart, and there stands the horse idle. In the winter it has little work to do, and I have often heard that horses grow restive when they stand long in the stable; so it cannot do it much harm if we trot about for half an hour.' And, without waiting for an answer, he ran into the parlour. All the little folks followed him, and surrounded the Curate.

George first whispered in his ear what they wished; and they all seconded his prayer, either with their looks or words. The Curate shook his head, and said, 'I know not whether Mr. Jones will be satisfied. I cannot give you my permission without his consent.' All the children then fixed their eyes on Mr. Jones, and he quickly saw, by their sparkling, that they wished to ask something of him. He came up to them, and inquired very good-humouredly what they were consulting about? The Curate told him in a few words; and Mr. Jones, who always liked to show that he reluctantly refused to satisfy the wishes of his children, seemed disposed to comply. He looked at the sky, and said, 'The sky is clear, the weather mild, and I have no objection to the party; but we cannot let them go alone, because some accident may happen through their thoughtlessness. It is necessary that some person of more years and experience should accompany them. But I am afraid, my dear sir, that this little jaunt might weary you, as you certainly are not quite recovered from the fatigue of your morning's journey.' But the Curate assured him that he would willingly take part in their pleasure; and added, that his little journey had not fatigued him, as he had designed to return in the evening.

The two mothers were now called, and asked whether they would accompany them.

This proposal was particularly agreeable to Mrs. Jones, who had not been out of the house for above a week, and wished for a little exercise.

Mr. Jones then ordered his own horse to be harnessed with the Curate's, that they might not overwork the horse whilst they were taking their own pleasure; and the children

hopped and jumped for joy. Whilst the horses were putting to, they drank tea, and then the whole company seated themselves in the cart; and they wrapped themselves up so warmly that they had nothing to fear from the cold.

They drove directly to the Downs from which they could see a great way on every side; and the icicles which hung on the rocks and trees seemed to be beautifully disposed on purpose to amuse them. The road was beaten and so soft, that the cart rolled smoothly on it without the company feeling any inconvenience from the motion; the weather was mild, the air still, and the whole heavens serene and bespangled with stars.

Mary was particularly pleased with this sight, and said to her brother, 'Look at all those little lights, how they twinkle!' 'They are not,' answered Charles, 'little lights, but great balls; the smallest of which is said to be larger than our earth.' Mary burst out a laughing, and said, 'Only think, father, Charles wants to make me believe that those little lights above us, in the sky, are great balls.'

'Charles is right,' replied the father; 'they are certainly balls; and the most part of them are larger than our earth.' 'But how do you know that, dear father,' asked Mary? 'I know it because they are so far from us, and still we can see them. Do you not remember how little the steeples of our city appeared when we were at a distance from them? It is the same with the stars; they seem little to us because we are far from them. If they were no larger than a flambeau, they would be as invisible to us as the bruises on the little balls at the tops of the steeples you saw when we were removed at a distance from them.'

'But is not this very wonderful,' continued Mary? 'Who has placed the stars so high? It is impossible for a man to reach them.'

'It is indeed impossible,' answered Mr. Jones; 'and it is for this reason that we ought to be certain, that, besides men, there still must be a Being whose power extends to the stars as well as to our earth. I will now name this Being to you: children, hear his name with reverence! He is called GOD! At these words Mr. Jones folded his hands, the Curate did

the same, the children imitated their example, and a profound silence ensued for above a minute, which the Curate broke, by saying, 'There is ever an awful pause in my mind when I think on this subject. We must be blind if, in what we see above, below, and around us, we do not discover God. No mill, no watch, begins to move of itself. All these machines are produced by the human understanding; much less can the great world proceed from itself. Every thing goes on in it as orderly as in a good watch. The stars never go out of their course, or drive against each other; and all things spring up in due season; as I can say, beforehand, where the hands of my watch will stand at a certain hour, so I know where the sun will be at eight o'clock to-morrow morning; where, to-morrow, will be this great beautiful star which we call Venus; nay, in what part of the sky the moon will appear in a few minutes. Look where I point with my finger, there it will soon be visible.'

Scarcely had they advanced a few yards when the moon arose, and they all clapped their hands and cried, 'Oh, the beautiful moon!' 'How little are we when compared with God,' continued he. 'I sometimes think, with wonder, on what I possess, when I walk in my garden. If I had a whole village, men would reckon me very rich; if a large estate, I should be called a great lord; and still greater should I appear if I had kingdoms, as for example, a prince, king, or emperor. But if I had a thousand kingdoms, if I had the whole earth, what have I of the whole universe?—not more than one of those little stars which glow above us. For to the people who inhabit those little stars, our earth, with all its mountains, cities, and steeples, cannot appear larger than one of those little lucid points in which they live.'

'Are there then people in the stars?' asked Mary, full of astonishment.

'How can we doubt it,' answered the Curate; 'for do you not see, my dear children, that on the earth everything is filled with living creatures. Dig into the earth, there all is alive. Mount upon a tree, there you will find various insects. Cut a tree in two, and you will see that it contains

a little city, in which there is a multitude of inhabitants. How many thousands of insects live in a single cheese? If God thus fills every little corner of the earth, do you think that he would leave those great globes like a desert? Would he have gathered together all the living creatures upon such a small point as our earth? The stars which we see are only a small part of the universe. Look at that broad white strip which crosses the sky; it is all composed of stars, which men discovered through good telescopes, and who knows how many thousands are still above them? God has made all these; they belong to God. Oh God, how great art thou!’ ‘Oh God, how great art thou!’ repeated Mr. Jones after him; and the whole company full of admiration remained silent.

‘Have you then,’ asked Mary, ‘seen God?’ ‘I have not seen him, nor can anyone see him,’ replied the Curate.

‘I cannot believe then that God is here, if we do not see him,’ said Mary. ‘I see you and my father, George, and all the rest of us; I see the houses too; why then do I not see God?’ The Curate would have explained the matter to her; but a sudden gust of wind carried his hat a considerable way over the Downs.

The boy who rode on the first horse held him in; the Curate got out and was obliged to run a good while before he caught his hat, for the wind rolled it before him.

After he had got it again, he came back to the cart, and said, ‘Do you know what took off my hat, and made it roll so far across the Downs?’ ‘Oh, you know very well,’ says Mary, ‘that it was the wind.’ ‘The wind,’ answered the Curate; ‘have you ever seen it?’ Mary having assured him that she never had, ‘You perceive, then,’ he continued, ‘my good girl, that there are things which no one has ever seen, and which still can produce effects. It is the same with God; no one sees him, yet he works everywhere.’

During this conversation, the hour destined for the little jaunt expired, and they turned towards home.

The children were so touched by what the Curate had said of God, that they were scarcely arrived at the house, when they begged him and Mr. Jones to tell them something more of their Creator. Mr. Jones went into an adjacent room,

and brought out a beautiful magnet with him. 'Pray, attention, children,' said he, 'now I will show you something very remarkable.' He laid a needle, then a knife upon the table; soon it raised them both, and they were attached to it. He afterwards laid a bar of iron under it to which a ring was fastened! It flew in the same manner, hanging to this wonderful stone, and so firmly adhered to it, that a considerable weight, which was suspended to the ring, could not separate them.

'What has raised the iron,' asked Henry?

'There is something invisible,' answered Mr. Jones, 'always in the magnet which attracts iron. There are many things beside which we cannot see, whose effects we still feel. Approach the oven, and you will feel it warm; go into the fresh air, and you will feel it cold. We have remarked, that cold makes the running water hard; and that, when you carry ice into a room, warmth will make it flow again. Nevertheless, you have never seen either the heat or cold in the air which does all this. So it is with God. Wherever we cast our eyes we see his works; but he himself is invisible to us.'

During these instructive conversations, the evening passed away; the time of rest approached; but the children were so impressed by what they had heard of God, that they earnestly entreated their parents to continue this conversation next day.

CHAPTER XLI.

SCARCELY were the children assembled at breakfast the following morning, when they repeated the request which they had made to their parents the evening before, that they would say something more of God; and Mr. Jones desired the Curate to take the task on himself.

'Dear children,' said he, 'you may easily believe that the God who has made those great globes in the heavens, and all that we see on earth, could easily torment and injure us, or, in a moment, kill us; but he does not do it; he only employs his power to give joy and pleasure to the living creatures whom he has created. All the pleasure that you

have enjoyed in your life, and still will enjoy, comes from the same God who made the stars. 'For he has produced all that gives you pleasure. This chocolate for example.'

'I beg your pardon, sir,' interrupted Mary; 'our cook made it.' 'So it seems to you,' continued the Curate; 'but, in fact, all comes from God. The cocoa and the sugar-cane, of which the chocolate is made, he commanded to grow. He produced the seeds out of which these plants sprang, warmed them with his sun, and moistened them with his rain. The water, which is necessary to mix with these ingredients, he lets spring out of a source that never fails; and the cook could not have made chocolate, if God had not given her more understanding than he has given to a cat or a dog.

'So it is with all that we see; God has made all. Nevertheless, it would all be lost on us if he had not so formed us that we can enjoy pleasure.

'Mary, hold your hand out a little, I will shed a little chocolate into it; does it not taste very good?'

'You joke, sir,' said Mary; 'I taste nothing.' He then gave her half a cupful which she raised to her mouth, and assured him that now indeed she tasted it. 'You see, children, how good God is,' continued the Curate. 'Had he given to our tongue and palate the same kind of skin that covers our hands, we should taste nothing, nor receive any more pleasure from good roast mutton than from chewing straw. And, on the contrary, had he made our hands in such a manner that we could taste through them, only suppose yourself how uncomfortable it would make us. Every moment we must take hold of things which have a disagreeable taste; and that would cause constant loathing and disgust. When we took a walnut out of its green covering, how much bitterness must we taste before we come to the sweet nut!'

He took a little almanack out of his pocket, and showed the children some pictures which they observed with pleasure. He then bid them shut their eyes, and held a picture to them; but they saw nothing. 'God could,' continued he, 'easily have formed our eyes like our eyelids; how miserable we should then have been! there would have been for us no beautiful

colours, no rays of the sun, no stars in the sky to please us, our whole life-long would be a black night. Shut your eyes once again, do you not find it true? Is not all obscure and black before you? So would you have been obliged to grope about all your life, if God had not in such an ingenious manner formed your eyes. But come to me, Henry, and look in my eyes; what do you see?' 'Myself,' answered Henry. 'I see indeed two little Henries, which appear as like to me as one egg to another.' 'And I see in thine,' said the Curate, 'two little Curates. Our eyes are like small looking-glasses, in which every object is reflected that passes immediately before us. In this way we remark every thing beautiful which God has produced in the world; we see the mountains, the woods, the flowers, the birds, the animals, the stars in the heavens, and our dear friends. Have you understood me?' The children assured him that they had. 'And now, George, stop your ears with your fingers. We see the mountains, the woods, the flowers, the birds, the animals, the stars in the heavens, and our dear friends (he winked that he should open his ears again), have you now understood me?' 'Not a word, dear father,' answered he. 'How much pleasure,' rejoined the Curate, 'should we be deprived of, if God had not given us ears. We should not hear the instructive conversations of our friends, nor the sweet sounds of music; and of what use would be the melodious voice of the nightingale, if we did not perceive it? all would be useless to us. 'What an agreeable odour the rose, the carnation, the auricula, the hyacinth, has! All these pleasures may be ascribed to that wisdom which has formed our nose different from our eyes, hands, and mouth; because he has formed it in such a manner, that through it we can feel the exhalations of things.

'It is thus our eyes, our ears, mouth, and nose are so many doors through which pleasure enters into our souls.' 'But oh, how much pain too, dear Mr. Curate,' said Charles, 'if you did but know what a dreadful pain I had in my teeth when my parents and sister were with you! Does pain also come from God?' 'Undoubtedly,' answered the Curate, 'pain also comes from God. For God, who has so formed us that

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we can feel agreeable sensations, made our nature such that we must also feel disagreeable ones. But when he has sent pain, he only does it that through pain he may procure us more pleasure. Your father has informed me that your toothache gave you an opportunity of becoming acquainted with an honest Jew who freed you from the pain; that this acquaintance had engaged him to advance a considerable sum that enabled the Jew to begin a business, by which he maintains his family in a decent, honest manner. When you see this Jew, what do you think?’

‘I always feel sincere joy,’ replied Charles.

‘And this joy,’ continued the Curate, ‘you have to thank your toothache for. If you had not had the toothache, the Jew could not have cured you; your father would not have become acquainted with him, and of course would not have lent him the money, which has been of so much use to him. Your pain is long since over, but the Jew’s happiness will for a length of time afford you joy. Experience has then taught you that pain is something good because it leads to joy. Can you still recollect how the Jew looked who freed you from your pain?’

‘O yes!’ answered Charles, ‘very well. He had a large nose, a grey beard, a brown coat, and a very strange way of talking. It seems to me as if I now heard him speak, as if I saw him before me.’

‘Observe,’ said the Curate, ‘further, that God has so made us that we can represent to ourselves past and absent things, and relish our amusements over again. He procures us, in this way, much pleasure. By this faculty we can represent an absent friend to our minds, remember the good we have done, the pleasures we have enjoyed, and procure ourselves many agreeable hours, independent of outward circumstances. Have you never read a book that amused you?’

‘Yes, many,’ answered they all.

‘Last week,’ said Charles, ‘I read “Young Grandison;” it is a dear book, and quite delighted me.’

‘But,’ continued the Curate, ‘if you were to put that book before a dog or a cat, it would not understand a word of the contents, and therefore could not receive any amusement from it. If God then had not given you reason, only think

how many pleasures you would be deprived of? You could neither read a book, nor write a letter; you could not reflect how you could better your situation; and no houses would be built, but you would be obliged to live in holes and caverns like animals. Does it not then appear that God must love men, when he has formed them in such a manner that they can enjoy so much pleasure?

'But,' said George, 'does not God love the poor animals, because He has not created them in such manner that they can enjoy as much pleasure as men?'

'Be not anxious about that,' answered his father. 'God has so formed every animal, that the greater part of its life is passed contentedly; its pleasures far exceed its pains. If animals are deprived of many of the enjoyments that God has granted to man, recollect that man is the most perfect work we are acquainted with, and has the most duties to fulfil. On the contrary, animals are perhaps often gratified with things which we pass over with indifference; life is a blessing to them, because it is a gift from God, who, when He called any creature into existence, designed to communicate some degree of happiness to it; and when it suffers pain, it is to render it better, in order that it may enjoy more pleasure. Look at Charles's Sancho, who is sleeping yonder. God has particularly destined for his nourishment the bones which man cannot eat. He can gnaw the gristle, and suck the marrow out of them, and live on what we cannot eat or relish. The poor animal would be in a dreadful state if he had a hoof like a horse, and weak teeth like a sheep. But you have just perceived that his Creator foresaw all that he would have need of to procure his food. Now I have something fast in my hand. Come hither, George, and try if you can guess, by smelling it, what it contains. You cannot. Now I will hold my hand to Sancho. See how he licks it; how he wags his tail; he will soon bark; he gives us now to understand that my fist contains something which is proper for him to eat; there, Sancho, you shall have it, you have guessed it; it was a crust of bread. You perceive by this that God has given a finer sense of smelling to the dog than to us; by which means he seeks for and discovers all the

nourishment around him which is fit for him. Consider a little his paws, how supple they are, and provided with such excellent nails with which he can hold fast the bone he wishes to gnaw; but this could not be done if he had the feet of a horse or a goat: and these teeth, see how firm and spiky they are; by the help of them he can gnaw the hardest bones, and suck out their marrow. It is the same with all animals—God has taken as much care of them as of the dog. He has given to each all that it required to procure it food and pleasure. If Mrs. Jones has in her kitchen a fowl or a fish intended for dinner, and will allow me to observe it a little, I will let you yourselves see that God has tenderly thought of it.’

Mrs. Jones went smiling out of the room, but soon came back, and brought a wild goose and a pike with her, which the cook had just killed and drawn.

‘Here will be something to see,’ cried the Curate. ‘Children; pay attention! This goose found its pleasure in the water; and you see that it is so formed, that it can live as well in the water as a man can on land. See what large feet it has, very unlike those of a turkey; but these kind of feet are necessary that it may advance in the water. If it had not such feet, it would with difficulty move from the place where it first began to swim. See how thick and close the feathers are together, so that the water rolls off without wetting it. Through the assistance of this warm fur, the animal can live continually in the water, without a drop coming to its body. But the food it finds in ponds and lakes, where it usually supports itself, might easily fail. What then would the poor animal do? its feet are not made for running. If it walked on the earth from one pond to another, it would soon be hurt or carried away by its enemies; but this inconvenience has been foreseen and provided for. What it wants in swiftness of foot has been made up by those long and strong wings. With these it can raise itself in the air very high, and can move itself from one place to another far quicker than I can in my pleasure-cart. Let us now examine its eyes; they are undoubtedly very different from ours. Observe, further, the tender little skin which this animal can advance to cover

its eye, yet can see very well through it. This skin, indeed, must be very useful when it plunges its head into the water; for it guards the eye in such a manner that no water can penetrate to it, and still does not prevent its discerning its food at the bottom. Its bill also deserves attention. It is armed with teeth with which it can break its prey.

‘Now let us consider the pike; it has neither feet nor wings, but these are not necessary; it only lives in the water, and never seeks for any pleasure out of it; yet it has been formed by its Creator with the same art and wisdom as other animals. Feel this armour which covers its body: it is all composed of scales, which lie so closely one over the other, that not a drop of water can come through them. You have certainly seen a ship, or some other vessel, and remarked the rudder which the pilot turns to direct its course. Our pike has likewise this rudder—it is his tail, in which there is great strength. When he strikes the water with it, he can move himself wherever he wishes; yes, he can, by the help of it, so strongly impel himself forward, that he glides through the water like a dart. And it must be so, or he would not live comfortably, because the little fish are destined for his support; and how could he catch them if he had not been made to swim quicker than they? But let us examine the other parts of his body. As the pike was made to live by hunting small fish, he had need of arms; and they are here in his maw: see these spiky teeth which are so firmly set; when he chases a fish, he darts upon it opened mouth, snaps it, and, alas! the poor fish that comes into his teeth need not think of escaping. You may ask, indeed, with surprise, why God has abandoned this little fish to the voracious pike? but, consider, if God would give life to a great number of animals, it could not be otherwise, some must support others. We hunt the hare and the partridge, and find them very good; why then should it seem unreasonable to us, if the pike chases the little fish and invigorates himself by devouring them? Some time or other those animals must die; and when the pike crashes them with his teeth, it is done in the twinkling of an eye; on the contrary, they would have endured much more if they had died of old age. I shall only say a few words

more of the pike; he is not entirely without feet. These strong fins serve instead of them, and must be very useful to him when he swims through the water, or glides to the bottom, which he often does. It is the same with all other animals: if you could bring me a thousand different ones, or the smallest worm, I could show you in each of them how God has provided it with the organs or instruments necessary for its obtaining all the nourishment and pleasure necessary for it.'

'O God, how good art Thou!' cried Charles, quite affected. 'Yes, indeed,' added Mr. Jones; 'we have cause to say, O God, how good art Thou! When I see the works of God, I cannot help believing that he is a master, whose greatest joy is to render happy those creatures whom he has made; or, to speak with more propriety, that he is the great Father of all. Through the whole world has he diffused pleasure; in every little plant, in every drop of water does it lurk; and he has so formed every living creature, that it can draw from this common source its portion of pleasure.'

CHAPTER XLII.

WHILE Mr. Jones was speaking, the Curate slipped out of the room. In about a quarter of an hour he returned and told the company something which was not very agreeable to them. 'The horse,' said he, 'is put to, and waits for us: children, we must now immediately take leave.' Then they all began, as they did the evening before, to expostulate, complain, and entreat. But after the Curate had represented to Mr. Jones that the necessary duties of his profession now obliged him to return home, he took his part, and said, 'I dare not detain a man who has important business at home.' Charles and Mary had at first refused to give up the Curate's great coat which they had seized on; but, as soon as their father desired them, they brought it to him. They now stood, near a quarter of an hour, taking leave, thanking and kissing each other. Then the guests stepped into the cart, after having received an assurance from Mr. Jones and family, that they would soon come and see them; and off they drove to their own village.

After dinner Mr. Jones returned to his business, and encouraged his family to do the same. During January and part of February, their employments went on in a regular manner, without any thing remarkable happening. It was towards the middle of February that something occurred which at first made them all very uneasy.

One day, as Mr. Jones was sitting in the midst of his family amusing himself with them, Mrs. Sandford entered the room; her eyes were red with weeping, and, after a short compliment, the bitterest complaints burst from her. 'Mr. and Mrs. Jones!' said she; 'ah, dear Mrs. Jones, pity me! If you do not take my part, if you do not assist me, I know not where I shall find refuge.' They offered her a chair, and asked her what had distressed her. She seated herself, and said, 'You will see how a poor widow is treated. I have earned so much by my daughters' and my own hard labour, as to be able to lay by one hundred pounds; this sum I did not wish to touch while I could work, that I might have something when I became old or sick; or if my dear children should have any unforeseen occasion for it. I know not how Mr. Skinpenny heard of it, who has an apartment in the house where I lodge; but it is about six months since he came into my room, and asked whether I would lend him a hundred pounds? saying, "that he should lose a great advantage in trade, if he had not that sum to complete a payment," he added that he "would give me a note for it; and, at the end of a quarter of a year, would pay me the money with many thanks." I did not even suppose that I had any reason to fear being betrayed by a man who had more guineas than I had pence. I gave him the money, and he gave me a note, on which was written that he had received a hundred pounds from me. I put this note into my bureau, and thought my money in good hands.

'But what do you suppose has happened? Three months passed away; another and another followed it, and Mr. Skinpenny did not appear to think of paying me. At last I reminded him. "Woman!" replied he, hastily; "do you dream, or are you mad? What! I borrow a hundred pounds of you? not a hundred pence have I seen of yours; I think

you are joking with me." I replied, "You have so much business in your head that probably you have forgotten this trifle; but I will show you your note." "Yes," said he, "when I see that, I will readily believe it." I ran up to my room, opened my bureau, but no note could I see. I searched through every part of it, through every corner of the room; but no note could I find.

'What could a poor woman do? I went to a relation of my deceased husband, who is an attorney, and told him of my distress. He advised me to bring the affair into a court of justice, offered to take my cause in hand, and added, that he would certainly make Mr. Skinpenny pay me. But this business has been going on for some time without my being able to guess how it will end, and has already drawn from me all the little money I had left. To-morrow it is to be determined, and Mr. Skinpenny will swear that I did not lend him the money. Think of this man, who will advance before the court, and venture to say that he will renounce the blessing of God; nay, that he wishes he may punish him if he received the gold from me, when he knows very well that he did. What a wicked man! my blood runs cold when I think on it. If he swears, I shall not only lose my money, and have to pay the costs of the suit, but be reckoned a cheat by those who are not thoroughly acquainted with my character. I, poor widow, I have no witness of my innocence but that God who knows all!'

Mr. and Mrs. Jones sincerely pitied her. 'It is,' said Mr. Jones, 'a disagreeable business; I know not what advice to give you; if the man swears, the money is lost; but do not let your courage sink, my dear madam. The all-seeing God is indeed, as you say, your witness; He knows that you lent the money, and that you received a note from the miser; and He will certainly, one day, bring your innocence to light.' 'This,' said Mrs. Sandford, 'is my only comfort; if I had not this, I should die under a weight of sorrows.'

While she was speaking thus, some one knocked violently at the door, and entered before they could guess who it was. It was a girl who had run herself quite out of breath. 'Is Mrs. Sandford here?' asked she; then perceiving her, she

said, 'Is it true that you have a lawsuit with Mr. Skinpenny; and does he intend to swear to-morrow that he never received any money from you? Be easy, things will not go so smoothly; here, here is his note! He has torn it, to be sure; but it may still be read. You will probably wish to know how I got it; I will soon tell you.

'You may remember that I lived some time ago as a servant in the house where you lodge. One day, when you went out with your daughters, I was putting some things to rights in a little closet on the same floor with your apartment. Mr. Skinpenny came softly upstairs, opened your door, and went up to your bureau with a key in his hand. I was astonished to see him enter; to think that a man, who I knew to be so rich, should turn thief! and waited, where I stood, till he came out. He did not make me wait long; he soon came out with a piece of paper in his hand, and shut the door very carefully after him. This made me very curious to know what he had been doing in your room; and as soon as he had returned into his own, I crept softly downstairs, peeped through the key-hole, and saw him tear the paper, and throw it into a closet amongst some other waste-papers which he generally burnt in the evening when he had a light. Now, thought I, I have seen enough. At night when I made his bed and lighted his candle, I busied myself for some time about the room; and when he turned his back for a moment, I snatched up the paper, and was half dead with fear, when I saw that the man had been so wicked as to steal a note which he had given you as an acknowledgment of a debt. I wished to have told you of it immediately, but you know when one has one's bread to get, it is necessary to be careful. I was afraid that my mistress might turn me away for disobliging her lodger; and I did not know what steps he might take to wreak his vengeance on me, so I resolved to lock it up safe in my trunk.

'I was soon after sent for to visit my poor sick mother, and quite forgot the affair till I heard this morning of your lawsuit. I then ran quickly to my trunk, and found the note where I had left it, and was as glad as if I had found twenty pounds. Here take it, and hold it to-morrow under

the old cheat's nose. I will be in court myself, and declare all I know of the matter.'

It may be easily conceived how good Mrs. Sandford was affected, when she saw herself suddenly delivered from all her troubles by the honesty of this girl. Agitated, she raised her hands to heaven, and said, 'O God, who knowest all things, how wonderfully Thou hast brought my innocence, and this man's wickedness, to light.' 'O, God, who knowest all things,' added Mr. Jones, 'Thou art witness to all our actions! happy would it be for us, if we always thought of Thy divine presence, and constantly did justice; so wouldest Thou one day make our honesty appear either in this world or a better.' He afterwards praised the girl's honesty, and encouraged her to relate firmly in the court what she had seen; and then went with her himself to the counsellor, and told him the discovery which they had made by her means.

He, like a humane man, testified his joy at this intelligence, and promised that the innocent Mrs. Sandford should have ample justice done her the following day.

At the hour appointed, Mrs. Sandford was ready, with a cheerful face; and Mr. Jones also went into court to see what turn this affair would take. Mr. Skinpenny appeared with a confused countenance, and the judge asked him if he still persisted to deny that he had borrowed any money of Mrs. Sandford?

'Yes,' was his answer; 'I did not want money; and, if I had, I certainly should not have thought of applying to such a poor woman.'

The judge then asked him if he would take his oath.

'Yes,' answered he, with a trembling voice.

The counsellor then showed him his note. He started back at the sight as if he had been struck with lightning. However, he recollected himself in a minute, and said, 'It was a forgery, and that he would swear that he had not written it.' But when the maid was called, who told him to his face in what manner he had stolen the note out of Mrs. Sandford's room, he could no longer deny it.

The judge then gave a charge to the jury, who, without

going out of court, pronounced him guilty; and he was condemned to pay her the money, and damages to the amount of two hundred pounds, besides the costs.

Mr. Skinpenny would have preferred a prison to parting with so much money; but, when he recollected himself, he gave it as if he had been parting with so much of his heart's blood.

It is easy to conceive what anguish it must have cost him, who groaned when he was obliged to part with a penny. All those who were in court sincerely rejoiced that God had brought to light what had been so cunningly concealed. Afterwards Mrs. Sandford gave ten guineas to the girl as a reward for her honesty, which she had some difficulty to make her accept.

CHAPTER XLIII.

WHEN Mr. Jones returned home, he found a poor woman who had already waited for him above half an hour. She most earnestly entreated him to interest himself about old Martin, one of his weavers, because his son had treated him very inhumanely, and left him to starve in a garret. 'What! a son leave a father to die with hunger?' asked Mr. Jones, quite shocked; and, without saying a word more, he followed the woman, who conducted him to the poor man.

After having mounted up three pair of stairs, he found him in the most wretched state: old age had rendered him so infirm, that he was unable to get out of his bed; and this bed scarcely deserved the name of one, for it only consisted of rags and a few old cushions, with not more than a handful or two of feathers in them. 'What! do you come yourself?' cried the wretched grey-headed man, as soon as he discovered him. 'Ah! will you help me? You see now how cruelly my graceless son has treated me! I gave him my house, with only this condition, that he should maintain me till my death; but, no sooner had he the house secure, than he used me like a dog; he turned me out of my own room, and only allowed me this miserable garret, where I am almost frozen with cold. He eats with his wife every day good roast or boiled meat, and only sends me bread and cheese,

and a little pot liquor; and, as if this was not enough, I am often obliged to wait till three or four o'clock before I can get a morsel; and when he brings me something, he gives it me with the most cutting words: he has even said that he is tired of me—that he could not any longer nurse me—and that I had lived long enough—and that it was time that I should leave the world. Oh! Mr. Jones, it is hard to hear such things from a child whom I have carefully brought up from his infancy, and put in a way to earn an honest livelihood.'

Mr. Jones trembled in every limb when he heard this. 'I could not have believed that there was a monster in the world,' said he, 'with such a hard heart as to abandon a father, who in his childhood was careful to nourish and educate him. Desire the man to come up here,' continued he, angrily, to the woman who had conducted him.

He came up with a ferocious look, and Mr. Jones asked him very solemnly, whether he was not afraid that God would punish him for leaving his father, his greatest benefactor, in want and sorrow? 'Why,' replied the rude man, 'I have children to support myself, and I have enough to do to procure them bread. I know not where it is to come from, if this old man must always have some dainty to devour; indeed, it is impossible for any man to bear with him. When he is in our room he finds fault with every thing; sometimes he scolds about this, sometimes about that. I do not like to have in my house such noise and vexation; I will be master here.'

The old man interrupted Thomas, saying, 'Thomas, what are you talking about? Do you not know that the house is mine? Have I, your father, deserved this of you?'

'Well, what right have you to say so much?' answered the hard-hearted man; 'you did not use your father much better; for our neighbours have not failed to tell me what an undutiful son you were in your youth. Do you still recollect how you gathered the scraps from your table for your poor father, which other people gave to their dogs?'

The grey-headed man trembled with remorse when he heard these bitter reproaches, and groaned out, 'O God! Thou art just.'

Mr. Jones then desired this ungrateful son to leave the

room, and asked the old man whether the accusations his son had brought against him were true? A stream of tears started from his eyes at this question. 'Ah, woe is me!' answered he; 'they are but too true! I had also my old father in my house; and because he for some years laid bed-ridden, and could no longer earn anything, I was weary of supporting him, and, indeed, often let him suffer want; and, oh! I now remember that I sometimes used very hard words when I spoke to the old man, my father. Here, upon these flocks where I lie, he also laid for three years, till he died in the greatest misery. Yes, now I see that my behaviour to my poor old father deserved this punishment.'

'Unhappy man,' said Mr. Jones, 'how could you be so cruel as to abandon your father? Did you never think how much trouble he had with you in your infancy? Did you not know then that God sees all, and that he is just? That he returns to every man what he has merited? That he rewards the good, and punishes the wicked? Could you expect your son to become good, when you yourself were wicked? See in all this the justice of God—bear patiently with the punishment you have deserved—and pray to God to have mercy on you; meanwhile I will endeavour to soften your misery as much as I can. Here is half a guinea; get something to cheer you, and I will now go to your son and advise him to act more like a man; and if you show by your patience that you truly repent, the just God may, perhaps, soften your punishment.' Saying so, Mr. Jones left the old man, whose tears flowed fast as he begged God to pardon him, and went to seek for his son.

He spoke very forcibly to him, and asked whether he did not hope to live to be old, and whether he did not fear that his children might treat him, in the days of his weakness, as he now treated his old father? He added, that the God who now punished his father's sins would also, in his own time, certainly punish him. For of this he ought to be convinced, since no man could escape the chastisement of the All-wise and just God; and growing still warmer, he continued, that 'if he did not that very day bring his old father into a warm chamber, and procure him a good bed, and sufficient nourishment and attendance, he would take no more notice

of him, and never give him any more employment; for if a man was so wicked as to be ungrateful to his parents, he should never expect him to act honestly towards other men.' These words were like a loud thunder-clap to the hard heart of the son, and frightened him into a promise, that he would behave better to his father in future.

And now, indeed, the fate of the miserable wretch was softened. Mr. Jones often inquired after him, and always heard that he was no longer suffered to want any thing.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE weather, towards the end of February, became very mild; the sun began to shine—warm winds to blow—and the snow to melt away. Charles and Mary saw with much pleasure how the earth and the tiles, which, till then, had been all white, now began to show their own colours. They believed that the spring was certainly coming. They actually considered how they should alter their little garden—what they should sow and plant in it—and already began to gather their seeds together, which they intended to sow in their little beds.

But as, during the winter, an unusual quantity of snow had fallen, which the warm weather suddenly dissolved, it covered all the fields like a sea, and the moistened earth could not readily imbibe such an unusual deluge of water. Torrents ran from all the mountains, swelling the Severn till it overflowed its banks, and spread desolation over the whole country. It was a fearful inundation!

It may be supposed that Mr. Jones's family were in pain for their beautiful garden, which lay on the banks of this river. Charles and Mary were continually peeping out to see how far the waters were come. When they went to bed the stream seemed to be as high as the bank; but in the morning the maid came into the room with the sad news that the whole garden stood under water.

At the same time they heard from all sides complaints of the devastation which the waters had made. One man spoke of the bridges, mills, and houses that had been carried away; of the trees which had been torn up by the roots,

and of the men that had been drowned. These accounts caused great trouble in Mr. Jones's family. He was sorry for his garden, but still more so for the unhappy wretches who by this inundation had probably lost all their property. Mary regretted her auriculas, and Charles was in pain for his beds of cabbages. Mrs. Jones thought of the little summer-house which had been built only a few years at some little distance from the river; and she feared, with reason, that the water had carried it away.

She had scarcely mentioned the summer-house, when Mr. Jones clasped his hands with terror, and said, 'Where is honest Henry who sleeps there? Our poor Henry! What has become of him? He must be drowned, or he will die of hunger.' They were all shocked, and said, 'Poor Henry! How could we so entirely forget him? What must we do? How shall we rescue him?'

'This instant,' said Mr. Jones to his servants, 'this instant run to a waterman, and beg him, with some of his men, to go in a boat to save Henry, and I will gladly pay him whatever he asks.'

The servant went, but Mr. Jones was so anxious, that he could not remain behind. He ran himself after the servant, and soon engaged a waterman, by the promise of a guinea, to row to the summer-house. Not satisfied with this, he jumped himself into the boat, and his servant followed him. He took one of the oars, and rowed with all his might, till he saw the summer-house, which indeed was in great danger: it stood in the midst of water which had filled the chamber in which Henry slept, and had almost reached the little upper room. When they came near, they discovered him half out of the window, extending his arms towards them. They redoubled their efforts—arrived—fastened the boat to the house, and threw a rope up to him by which he might descend. Full of joy he caught hold of the rope, fastened it to the window, and slipped down.

As soon as he came into the boat, he fell upon his knees, and cried out, 'O God, Thou hast had compassion on me! Thou hast heard my prayer!' Then he rose and thanked Mr. Jones and the people who were with him very heartily for their having taken such care to save his life.

Afterwards Mr. Jones asked him how he felt when he found himself in such great danger?

‘At first,’ said he, ‘I thought I should soon die with terror. Yesterday evening I lay quietly down to rest; but scarcely had it struck twelve, when I heard a shaking and a noise in my room; I listened and slumbered again, but the noise still increasing, I was soon broad awake. Unable to stay any longer in bed, I sprung out, and stood up to the calves of my legs in water. I cannot describe how terrifying this was! I quickly snatched up my clothes, waded through the water till I came to the door, and ran upstairs to the room where you and madam drink tea in the summer. But what anguish did I afterwards endure! The wind raged against the windows, and whistled through the house; the waters made such a tempestuous noise that I suspected nothing less than the ground would give way under me. This morning, about five o’clock, the water entered the upper room, then I gave up all hopes. It appeared certain that I should perish by hunger or water. At last I thought that God was with me, and at the same moment I began thus to pray to him: “Gracious God! Thou hast already preserved me fifty years in this world: Thou hast granted me many blessings which I ought to thank Thee for; and Thou wilt not even now abandon me: save me, if I can be of any use in the world—it is very easy to Thee. But if it is Thy will that I should now quit the world—behold me—here I am. My God! I am content. Thou art my dear Father, and I am Thy child. I must submit to whatever Thou thinkest fit to do with me—what Thou wilt! It must be good, if it comes from Thee.” I cannot express to you, sir, how comfortably I felt after this prayer; such a pleasant hour have I not had for a great while. I felt, through my whole soul, that I was near God, and my fear vanished. I almost died with joy when I thought, should my gracious God leave me to die, He must know that death is better for me than life. Afterwards I stood upon the chair on which I had been sitting, and said, once more, cheerfully, “Yes, gracious God, I am here—do with me what seemest best to Thee!” Then I went to the window, looked out, and saw nothing but water around me, for no

living soul could I see. For about three quarters of an hour did I look around—my thoughts still turned to God. When I discovered a boat, and saw that it rowed towards me, it seemed to me as if God himself was coming; for I firmly believed, dear master, that God sent you to me.'

Mr. Jones praised Henry's behaviour, and assured him that an ardent prayer was the best means to procure us comfort in trouble, and courage in danger. He added that, 'as soon as a man prayed to God he must think of Him; and when he thought that he had such a good master, such a tender father, he would be brought into such a frame of mind as not to fear any thing. When we resign ourselves entirely to God, not presuming to point out, in the slightest way, what He should do with us, but entirely rely on Him who made us, so will He at all times give us what is best for us. This I have very often experienced,' added he; 'and prayer has frequently comforted me when in the deepest anguish.'

During this conversation, the boat had crossed the water. Mr. Jones paid the waterman very generously, and took Henry with him home. A tumult of joy arose in the house when he appeared. They brought him into a warm bed-chamber, and Mrs. Jones ran herself to bring him some broth. The servants gave him dry clothes; and the children seated themselves by him, and begged him once more to tell them what he had related to their father.

CHAPTER XLV.

At the end of two days, the water returned back into its channel. The third day a strong wind blew, which dried the earth so quickly, that on the fourth Mr. Jones could take his children into the garden: but there they only saw a desolate waste; the water had carried away all the low plants and good ground, and left a quantity of stone and sand behind: some trees were torn up by the roots, and many that were nailed to the wall were broken down: the summer-house was very much injured, not only by the water but by

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a part of the beautiful bridge, which the flood had driven against it. Wherever they looked they saw marks of devastation. The children began to lament and complain of the injury which the inundation had occasioned. Mr. Jones also looked very much disturbed, and said, 'See, children, how powerful God is! I have now for five years had this garden cultivated—I have laid out more than four hundred pounds on it—many men have been employed, from morning till evening, to embellish it—and this bridge, which has been, you see, washed away, cost ten thousand pounds, and more than a hundred men have laboured at it. All this, in less than two days, has God levelled to the ground. What, in this great country, has been brought to some degree of perfection, by thousands of men, in a course of years, He has in such a short time destroyed. And do you know by what means He has done all this? By simple flakes of snow, which He made fall from the clouds, and afterwards become water. What He will, He can do! He has not only the flakes of snow under His command, but all that the universe contains must do His will. With the smallest things He can produce the greatest effects. What, in comparison with man, is a caterpillar? nevertheless, when he causes these insects to multiply abundantly, He can, by their means, destroy the trees of a whole country. What is smaller than a drop of blood? yet, when it does not circulate through my body, and become corrupt, it can soon kill me. A single spark of fire, if it fell into combustible matter, in a few hours might burn our whole city to ashes; but all these things are under the direction of God; for by those same rays of the sun, by those same drops of water which fall from the clouds, He can in a short time produce such an immense quantity of vegetables, fruits, and grain, that millions of men and animals are supported by them, without consuming all. My dear children, the God who can do all these things is your father and friend; and as long as you act properly, He will never employ his power but to do you good; you may live safely under his wing, if you avoid evil.'

'But, dear father,' said Mary, 'I am not a wicked child; why has the good God destroyed my auriculas? and you,

who are such a good father, why has He laid your garden waste?’

‘You believe then that I am a good father,’ answered Mr. Jones; ‘nevertheless I do many things which you do not like. Often I do not let you go into company, where you desire to be. I often take from you playthings which gave you pleasure. You do not always know why, yet you think me a good father. It is the same with God; He does many things which you do not like, but He is as far from designing to injure you as I am, when I sometimes take away your playthings.’

‘Good morning, Mr. Jones, good morning. Good morning, my dear children,’ cried a voice, suddenly to them; they turned quickly round, and saw—yes, they saw their old friend the Curate. Mr. Jones caught one hand, the children the other.

‘Oh!’ said the Curate, ‘your garden presents a very melancholy prospect; but mine is still worse. My poor garden is quite destroyed; my trees torn up; my wall thrown down; and the whole surface covered with sand and stones.’

‘Have your apples also suffered?’ asked Charles.

‘Undoubtedly,’ replied the Curate.

Mr. Jones heartily pitied this good man, because he must far more sensibly feel his loss, since he was not rich, and could not easily spare the money necessary to rebuild his wall, and clear the rubbish out of his garden. He took him by the hand, and requested him to walk with him into his room, where they could converse more freely about this disaster.

As soon as they had seated themselves, the Curate said, ‘My dear friend, I will in a few words tell you why I am now come; I want some money. If I would not the whole year see my garden a waste; if I expect to see nourishment for my wife and children again grow in it, it is absolutely necessary that I have it cleared away this week, and the wall rebuilt, else the season will be past, and I shall not be able either to sow or plant in time: however, I have not so much money beforehand; I shall want at least twenty pounds: will you lend me that sum?’

‘How can you doubt it, dear friend,’ replied Mr. Jones; ‘if you want a hundred you shall have it. For this has God especially given me money, that I should be able to help others.’ ‘But,’ continued Mr. Jones, ‘how happens it that you are so cheerful, after having sustained such a great loss? You seem as contented as if every thing had gone well.’

‘And why should I be troubled,’ answered the Curate. ‘Do I not assuredly know who has destroyed my garden—God has done it; and when I know that He is goodness itself, can I believe that He meant to do me any harm by it? Through my whole life have I experienced that He cares for me, that He turns all evil from me, and so directs all the disappointments which I have to struggle with, that in the end they will be useful to me.’

‘When I was a boy I wished to cut a branch off a willow which hung over a stream; but I went so carelessly to work that I fell into it. The current carried me along. I saw the bank once again, and thought it was the last time that I should ever see it. But God was there, and rescued me by means of a beggar, who sat on the bank mending his tattered clothes. He quickly drew me out of the water—out of the jaws of death.’

‘In my eighteenth year I had such a severe toothache, that I was quite weary of my life, and God forgive me for it! I almost mistrusted Him; but, through this violent pain, God brought me so to Himself, that I turned to Him, and learned to pray; and my prayer so calmed my mind, that I patiently endured the anguish, till a friend pointed out a remedy. How many times have I not since thanked God that He let me suffer, else I should never have prayed so heartily, nor have known the advantages of prayer.’

‘When I was at the University, I had a burning fever, which tormented me during some weeks, and wasted all my strength; but when I again recovered, I remarked that this illness was sent me as a blessing from a gracious God, for I had always before been rather sickly; but this violent disorder purified my blood, and I found myself in better health than I had ever enjoyed.’

‘When I came back from the University I found in my

neighbourhood an enemy, who said the most shameful things of me behind my back; and even tried to exasperate the rector against me, assuring him that I was a very ignorant, disorderly man. By these lies he drew his attention on me, so that he observed all my actions; and when he found that I was a good and orderly man, he gave me the curacy I now have. Thus God directed things in such a manner, that my enemy's malice was my recommendation.

'In this curacy I had indeed, at first, much care; my little income was not sufficient for the expenses which I thought necessary; but I always hoped that God would point out a method for me to get rid of these gnawing cares. My hope did not deceive me. I found in my old farmer a deliverer. He gave me such wise advice, that through it I was drawn out of all my distress.

'What I last year endured with my sick family, you know already; and how much we all learned from the sick chamber, you also know. If I then so long have experienced the goodness of God, and so clearly perceive that He turns all my distresses for my good, why should I not believe that He will do so still? I have no care, for God cares for me.'

CHAPTER XLVI.

Now they were called to dinner, and the Curate was not a little surprised at not finding Mrs. Jones there. He immediately inquired after the cause of her absence, and was informed that she had caught cold the day before, and found herself so unwell this morning, that she was obliged to remain in bed. The Curate was very sorry; but, during the meal, tried to calm Mr. Jones's fears, and assured him that, if he would be attentive, he would certainly experience that this sickness also would lead to some good, since every thing God sends us was good, however bitter it might appear to us. Scarcely was the meal finished when he began to prepare for his departure, and would not let himself be detained by Mr. Jones's very pressing entreaties. Mr. Jones then counted out forty pounds, but he would not take more than twenty, because, he said, more was not necessary. In

taking leave, he wished once more that Mr. Jones's dear wife's indisposition might only make him better acquainted with the goodness of God.

Scarcely was he gone, when Mr. Jones flew to his wife's bedside. He found her worse than he had supposed—her pulse beat very irregularly, and she complained of a pain in her head and a violent thirst. If Mr. Jones had not cherished the comfortable reflection, that all is good which a gracious God sends, this sight would quite have overcome him; but he recollected himself, and thought, 'Merciful God! my wife is in Thy hands—what Thou hast determined will certainly happen—and something hurtful Thou wilt not resolve on for me!'

He then sent immediately for a physician, who gave him very little comfort; for going away, he said, 'Dear sir, do not regard your wife's illness as a slight one—she will require a great deal of our care.' On hearing of these words, Mr. Jones had need of all his fortitude, for his wife was inexpressibly dear to him, and every pang which she endured he felt as severely as if he had been attacked by it himself.

The following night was a dreadful one; the poor patient never closed her eyes—she groaned and was restless; and her pangs were sometimes so violent, that she grew delirious and would get out of bed to go and see Mrs. Sandford. Mr. Jones never left her bedside, and tried, in the most persuasive accents, to compose her. In the morning she was a little better, but felt herself extremely weak. The two following nights were passed in the same distressing manner, and the day after she was so exhausted that she could scarcely speak a word.

The fourth day, when the physician visited her, she said to him, with a trembling voice, 'Dear sir, I have a request to make to you; tell me sincerely, do you believe that I shall die?—I fear not death!' The doctor was silent, and shrugged up his shoulders. 'You think that I shall die?' said she. 'Well—I am prepared—Thy will, oh my God, be done!' She then made signs to the physician to leave her, and that her husband and children should draw near.

They came, with eyes swimming in tears, trying to restrain

their sobs, and hiding their faces with their handkerchiefs. 'Weep not, my loves,' said she; 'and disturb not my last earnest prayer.'

Then she collected all her strength—folded her hands together—raised her eyes to heaven, and prayed aloud: 'Gracious God! I thank Thee for all the goodness Thou hast shown me in this life—for every pleasure Thou hast granted me—for all the discipline Thou hast imposed on me. Now Thou callest me to Thyself—here I am, my God—confiding in Thy love, I come to Thee—be gracious to me, oh my Father—be my husband's and children's Father.'

She was interrupted, because her husband and children now wept so loud that her weak voice could no more be heard.

But she soon made a fresh effort—turned herself to her husband, and said, 'I thank you, I thank you, dear husband, for all the love and fidelity which you have shown me since our marriage. God reward thy love! God bless thee! Farewell ——'

He fell upon her neck, and almost stifled her with kisses and tears; and the children cried, 'Oh, dear mother, do not die! mother! mother! Ah, mother, do not die!'

She slipped out of her husband's arms and said, 'I shall not die, dear children! I only lay aside this body, as doth the butterfly the hull in which it was inclosed. My spirit is immortal and goes to God, to whom we must all go, and He will reward each accordingly as they have acted in this life; the wicked He will punish—the good place in a better situation and reward them. Be good, dear children—obey your tender father—offend no one—be affectionate to all men—think at all times that God sees you, He, to whom I, your mother, am now going; so shall we soon in a better world all meet together and live in eternal happiness. God be merciful to me! Pardon my faults! I——fall——into Thy arms—oh Thou great Father of us all!'

—Here she fainted, and sank motionless on her pillow.

With much difficulty Mr. Jones brought her so far to herself, that she again opened her eyes; but she could speak no more. Her eyes were fixed on her husband and children,

and she exerted all her strength, still to show them, by signs, how much she loved them. Her heart began to beat more violently—she had a rattling in her throat—her limbs were motionless, and a cold sweat was spread over her whole body. In this condition she laid two hours—then her spirit departed.

It is impossible to describe the lamentations which her death caused. Husband and children, Mr. Noel and the clerks, men and maids, all wept bitterly, and exclaimed, ‘Ah, the best of wives! the good mother! our kind mistress, have we lost you? how sad will the house be when you are no more there. Oh mistress! mother!’

The following day her corpse was laid in the coffin in which she was to be buried. Then the lamentations grew still louder. As soon as the news was spread over the city that Mrs. Jones was departed out of this world, a number of poor collected themselves from every corner, to see her corpse. And when they saw her, lamented over her—‘My benefactress,—my more than mother!—my support when I had no one to help me. Best of women! best of women!’ echoed through the whole house. A woman rushed through the crowd and seized her cold hand. ‘God, God bless you! dear woman, for all the good you have done to me. You brought me up, a poor orphan—I could not reward thee! but God, with whom thou now art, He will reward thee; and when I come to the judgment-seat of God, I will tell how thou educated a helpless child. He alone can bless thee as thou deservest to be blessed.’

Afterwards the body was carried to the grave; a great quantity of people followed the funeral, and, as they followed, resounded her praise.

When Mr. Jones returned from the funeral, he sunk almost lifeless on the sofa, and his children ran mournfully to him. ‘Dear children,’ said he to them, ‘the greatest comfort I had in this world God has taken from me. Your dear mother He has called to himself, to reward her for all the love she has shown us, and so many poor people. Now there is nothing so dear in the world to me as you. If you should become wicked, I should not long remain in this

world, grief would soon bring me also to the grave. But if you are good, obedient, industrious children, and attend to truth, I shall still find some comfort, even after the loss of your mother.'

The children kissed his hands, bathed them with their tears, and promised him that they would implicitly obey his will.

They kept their word. They grew up, and Mary became as benevolent, sincere, and complaisant as her mother had been ; and those who knew her mother used to say, 'this is another Mrs. Jones.' And Charles became a worthy man, who by his activity and benevolence gained the affection and respect of all his friends and acquaintance.

For a long time Mr. Jones saw in the conduct of his children the fruits of the good lessons which he and his wife had given them ; and though in the following years he considerably increased his fortune, yet he was still more and more convinced that, among all his treasures, he found nothing that afforded him so much pleasure as the gratitude of his children ; and their good behaviour rewarded him for the pains which he had taken with them in their education.

A PUZZLE

FOR

A CURIOUS GIRL.

CHAPTER I.

CURIOSITY EXCITED.

'OH! I had intended to stop,' exclaimed Mrs. Belfast, as her carriage turned down a lane out of Kensington, the place of her residence. 'Do, my dear,' continued she, addressing herself to her daughter, 'pull the checkstring.' 'Why, mamma—why, mamma?' eagerly inquired Laura. 'Be quick, my dear,' replied her mother; 'we shall have gone too far for me to turn back.' Laura pulled the checkstring, and let down the glass.

'I meant to have stopped,' said Mrs. Belfast to her coachman, 'before we had left the town; but as the lane is narrow, you need not turn back. I'll alight here.'

The moment the coach door was opened, Laura was jumping out. 'You may wait for me,' said Mrs. Belfast; 'I shall not be gone five minutes.' 'Pray, mamma, let me go with you,' said Laura. 'No, my dear, it does not suit me,' answered her mother. 'Now do, pray, let me come, I wish for it so very much.' Mrs. Belfast, however, without staying to hear her finish her entreaty, desired the footman to shut the door.

Laura continued teasing, with her head out of window, till she saw her mother turn round into Kensington; and then throwing herself upon the seat, 'What can be mamma's objection,' said she, 'to my going with her? I am sure there can be no reason against it. She said she should not be gone five minutes. How provoking it is!'

Five minutes, ten minutes, elapsed, and no Mrs. Belfast

returned. 'Where can my mamma be gone?' exclaimed Laura. 'I am sure I wish I had jumped out; she would then, perhaps, have taken me with her.' Her curiosity now passed all bounds. 'Did you see which way my mamma went, Thomas?' said she to the footman, who was walking backwards and forwards by the side of the coach. 'No, miss; how should I!' replied the man. 'Oh, I wish I knew,' said she.

Half an hour passed, which, to Laura's impatience, appeared double the time. 'Open the door, if you please, Thomas,' said she; 'I must go and see after my mamma.'

The moment she had alighted, Mrs. Belfast appeared in sight. Laura skipped back into the coach. 'Where were you going, my dear?' said Mrs. Belfast, as soon as they were seated. 'I—I—I began to be uneasy,' replied her daughter, blushing.

'Thank you, Laura, for your anxiety on my account,' said Mrs. Belfast, looking earnestly at her; 'I was detained longer than I had expected.'

'Mamma,' said Laura, trying to assume a smile, after a few moments' silence, 'where have you been such a long time?'

'Laura,' replied Mrs. Belfast, 'I see plainly what will be the case; as usual, you will make yourself unhappy for the day, because there is a trifling circumstance with which I have not acquainted you. Do, my dear, take my advice in time, and try to suppress your insatiable curiosity.'

'Yes; but you will tell me, will you not, where you have been?'

'Is this a proof, Laura, you are following my advice?'

'But I do wish so very much to know. I never was so puzzled in all my life. Oh, mamma, if you would but answer me this one question, I would never be curious again.'

'If I do, you will not be nearer satisfied; for it will introduce another, which I certainly shall not answer.'

'Only tell me that, mamma, and I will not ask you anything further. Did you call anywhere?' 'Yes.'

'At Mrs. Green's?' 'No.'

‘Upon Miss Harris?’ ‘No.’

‘Upon any poor person?’

‘Poor in comparison of some, and rich in comparison of others; not a person in absolute indigence.’

‘Did you see anybody that I know?’

‘Yes; six—seven people that you know.’

‘Six or seven gentlemen and ladies?’

‘It is a nice point to determine who are gentlemen and ladies.’

‘Mamma, you are determined not to understand me: you know very well what I mean.’

‘Well, my poor Laura, I will take pity upon you. The seven persons of your acquaintance whom I saw were not, according to your acceptance of the word, gentlemen and ladies.’

‘Where is it possible you can have been? Surely not to any shop: you could not in that case have objected to my going with you.’

‘Nevertheless, it was to a shop that I went.’

‘To a shop, mamma! what shop?’

‘To Mrs. Hilcox’s, to purchase something I had occasion for.’

‘To purchase what, mamma?’

‘A puzzle for a curious girl.’

‘Now, mamma, how you do delight to worry me!’ said Laura, peevishly. ‘Speak,’ continued she, bursting into tears of vexation, on finding her mother paid no attention to what she last said. ‘Now do, pray, tell me what you went to buy.’

‘No, you are now come to the unanswerable question; so, with your leave, we will change the subject.’

Laura, after this, ventured not to plead any further; but she was silent and out of humour the remainder of the ride. Her mother very kindly attempted several times to lead her into conversation; but finding all her endeavours fruitless, she took a book out of her pocket, and began to read.

CHAPTER II.

THE MYSTERY RELATED TO A FRIEND.

LAURA, still vexed and dissatisfied, was by no means in her usual spirits at dinner. In the course of the afternoon, Ellen Green, a favourite playmate, of nearly her own age, unexpectedly called upon her. Laura led her young friend into the garden, and putting her arm round her waist, immediately began to impart to her the grievance that oppressed her mind.

‘O, my dear Ellen,’ said she, ‘I am glad you are come; for such a strange thing has happened, that I wished to consult you. Do you know,’ she continued, with an air of importance, ‘my mamma and I went out this morning for an airing. We had no sooner turned down the lane that leads to Chelsea, than she desired me to pull the checkstring for Jacob to stop. I asked her why, and she would not tell me. She would not have the coach turn round; but she got out, and away she walked, without listening to what I had to say; only telling me she should be back in five minutes. I could not think what was the matter; for she was gone, I dare say, near an hour. When she came back, I found, after a great deal of guessing, that she had not called upon any of our acquaintance, but had only been to Mrs. Hilcox’s; but I am more puzzled than ever, to think why there should be so much mystery.’

‘Perhaps,’ said Ellen, she went to buy a present for you. What are you most in want of?’

‘I want a thousand things,’ returned Laura: ‘my housewife is so shabby, that I am almost ashamed of its being seen; and I have long wished for a netting weight and a smelling-bottle like yours; but what I should like best of all would be that sweet little Tunbridge-ware writing-box we both admired so much.’

‘Well, Laura,’ rejoined Ellen, ‘I do really think it is not impossible that your mamma should have bought that box

for you. She saw the other day how much you were pleased with it.'

'To be sure,' said Laura, 'it would be quite like her. She is always so good, and so indulgent. And now that you have put this into my head, dear Ellen, I begin to be sorry for my behaviour this morning. To speak the truth, I was a little out of humour; but it always provokes me to see a person make secrets for nothing.'

A summons to tea now broke off the conversation, and the two little girls had no opportunity to renew it the remainder of the evening; but, before they parted, Laura promised to give her friend a particular account, the first time they met, of all she could discover relating to this important mystery.

The following day was a restless one to the curious temper of Laura. Mrs. Belfast did not attempt to account for her wonderful disappearance. Her behaviour was the same as usual, nor did she appear to notice her daughter's uneasiness. She put her hand into her pocket several times, and once she even felt in it longer than usual. Laura watched her with eagerness. Her mamma had just commended her attention to her studies, and surely, thought she, this is the moment to reward it. Mrs. Belfast's countenance, too, as she drew out her hand, expressed to her raised imagination something more than ordinary. Alas! what a blank did she experience, when she saw her at length put on her thimble, and quietly begin to work. Another time, as Laura was hastily running by the room in which her mother was sitting, she heard herself called. 'Do you want me, mamma?' said she, eagerly, flattering herself that she should at that moment receive her expected present. 'I only wish you, my dear, to tell Nanny that I want to speak with her.' A second severe mortification for the anxious Laura.

Evening came on, and happily brought with it some relief. 'When you were at Mrs. Hilcox's yesterday,' inquired she, 'did you see the beautiful little writing-box?'

'No, my dear, it was sold.'

This answer was a clue to unravel the mystery. From her mother's knowing so positively it was sold, it was plain she

had inquired after it ; but as it might have been a day or two before she could procure another, the reason that it had not yet been mentioned was evident.

When Laura retired to bed, she amused herself by anticipating the pleasure the possession of so charming a treasure would afford her ; and the next morning she contrived to send a note to Ellen, acquainting her that they had not been mistaken in their conjectures.

Nearly a week elapsed, and Laura began to grow very impatient for the arrival of the standish. She was one morning sitting with her mamma, when the maid came in and said that a person had brought a box, but was not certain that he was at the right house.

‘O yes,’ said Mrs. Belfast; ‘it is for me; let it be taken in.’

‘Shall I go and fetch it, mamma?’ said Laura.

‘No, my dear, Nanny will take it to my dressing-room; I am busy, and do not want it here.’

‘Mamma, I will carry it up, if you please.’

‘I had much rather, Laura, you should mind your work. You know I wait for what you are doing.’

Laura was obliged to stifle her impatience, and continue her employment ; but she pleased herself with the thought, that she was certain of soon receiving the long-hoped-for present, and finding the mystery completely done away.

CHAPTER III.

A PEEP INTO THE BOX.

MRS. BELFAST had an engagement for the evening ; and Laura, who had not before had an opportunity, ran up into her mamma’s dressing-room the moment the coach had driven from the door. After searching in vain all over the room, and looking in every open drawer, a plain deal box, on the top of a high chest of drawers, attracted her attention ; which, though of itself without either beauty or value, might, she hoped, contain the object of her wishes.

Her eyes sparkling with expectation, she mounted upon a chair, and attempted to take it down ; but after having

reached it with a good deal of difficulty, as she was still too short to hold it securely, it unfortunately slipped from her hands, and falling upon a large swing-glass that stood upon a dressing-table beneath, smashed it into a thousand pieces.

Laura was, however, too much engaged to pay any attention to the accident. She sprang from the chair; but on lifting up the cover, how great was her surprise to find that the box was empty!

'Oh, dear!' she exclaimed, 'how can this be! Surely everything happens to tease me. I am not at all nearer knowing the secret than I was before.' And then she added, looking mournfully at the glass, 'What an unlucky accident! Oh, what shall I say to my mamma?'

Having employed herself for some time in picking up the broken glass, she went to Nanny, and after bewailing her misfortune, inquired if she could tell what it was that came in the fatal box? 'Oh yes, miss,' said Nanny; 'Miss Fenning sent home your mamma's new bonnet in it. My mistress is gone out in it to-night.'

'Ah! is that all?' said Laura, in a disappointed tone. 'But pray, Nanny, can you tell whether any other box, or any parcel, has come to the house this last week without my knowing it?'

'No, that I can't,' answered Nanny; 'but I have not heard of any.'

Laura then, with equal eagerness, repeated the same question to all the other servants, and received from each of them a similar answer.

Miss Belfast's disposition was ingenuous: she therefore determined to be the first to acquaint her mother with the accident. The moment she returned she ran to her, and summoning all her courage, tremblingly informed her of all that had happened.

'Is there no end to your restless curiosity?' inquired Mrs. Belfast. 'Could you suppose that there was anything in that box that related to you?' Laura coloured and hung her head. 'Speak, Laura,' continued her mother; 'did you imagine that the box contained anything of yours? or what could induce you to be so insufferably inquisitive?'

'Mamma,' returned the abashed girl, 'you know you would not tell me, the other day, what you went to buy at Mrs. Hilcox's; and I took it into my head it was a present for me; and I thought it might be in that box; and so I looked to see what it was.'

'I will forgive you this once,' rejoined Mrs. Belfast, 'in consideration of your honest confession; but let not the lesson of this afternoon be lost upon you. Do endeavour to check this prying propensity, which, believe me, Laura, if indulged, will prove your tormentor through life. As to your present conjectures,' continued she, after a pause, 'they were quite without foundation; for I had not the smallest intention of buying any thing for you at Mrs. Hilcox's. The mighty occasion of my leaving you, I may possibly one day be at liberty to reveal.'

A day or two passed before Laura had an opportunity to relate her disappointment to Ellen, during which time her imagination was constantly on the stretch to find something mysterious in the most simple occurrence, and to trace in whatever was said some allusion to the wonderful visit to Mrs. Hilcox's.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DISPUTE.

LAURA having obtained permission to visit her friend, immediately took her aside to relate all that had passed. 'And now, my dear Ellen,' said she, 'I do not know what to suppose. The more I think over every circumstance, the more I am convinced my mamma left me for some very particular reason. She thought to impose upon me, that is very plain, by telling me she went to Mrs. Hilcox's to purchase something; but I am not to be caught so easily neither. It is very likely she did buy some trifling article; but that never was her motive for stopping the coach, and refusing to take me with her.'

'Pooh!' said Ellen, 'what other reason could she have for going to the shop?'

'That,' said Laura, 'I am sure I cannot tell; for I have

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puzzled to no purpose. She was saying yesterday, that people should, in some cases, be careful to assist privately those that are in distress, as it might hurt their feelings, if it should be known that they accepted of relief; and this seemed to bring to her mind Mrs. Hilcox; for she spoke of her immediately after. So it came into my head, that she might possibly have called to carry her two or three guineas, for you know she lost her husband very lately.'

'Yes; but you know she is in a very good way of business.'

'So everybody supposes, but we very often hear of shopkeepers going on for some time in a flourishing way, and then breaking all to nothing, to the surprise of all the world; and I should not wonder if that should soon be the case with the Hilcoxes. However, let my mamma have done for them what she would, there could certainly be no objection to her mentioning it to her own daughter.' Ellen smiled. 'You cannot imagine,' continued Laura, gravely, 'how I am puzzled between my different fancies. There is one,' added she, sighing, 'that I fear is but too likely to be true; and yet it is so melancholy, that I cannot bear to think of it.'

'Dear Laura, what can that be?' inquired Ellen.

'We went the night before last to drink tea with Mrs. Darwin and her daughter, who, you know, have the first floor at the Hilcoxes'; and when we came away, my mamma praised Maria as the most amiable and accomplished girl she knew, and said she did so much credit to her instructress, that there was no school to which she should so much like to send a daughter of her own, as to Mrs. Hutchinson's, where Maria has been ever since she was eight years old. From this, and from a great many other circumstances, I cannot help fearing that she went to Mrs. Hilcox's to make inquiries of Mrs. Darwin; and that she means to send me to school with Maria as soon as the Midsummer holidays are over.'

'But did not your mamma tell you that she did not call upon any lady?'

Laura. Not upon any lady according to my acceptance

of the word ; but she knows very well that I do not think Mrs. Darwin looks at all like one, with her slouch bonnet and morning cap, for she has heard me say so a thousand times.

Ellen. Well I think you have no occasion to make yourself uneasy.

Laura. But when one is in a puzzle, such odd notions will come into one's head ! However, I must own I sometimes think I am a great simpleton, to torment myself, while perhaps my mamma might only have intended to give me pleasure, and might have gone to Mrs. Hilcox's to bespeak her son to come and play to us some afternoon on his violin while we danced upon the lawn.

'Oh, dear !' exclaimed Ellen, giving a sudden spring for joy, 'what a charming evening we should have ! But tell me, Laura, what reason have you for this supposition ?'

Laura. Oh, not much ; only my mamma told me she wished I would practise the steps more by myself, for I had so forgotten them, she should be ashamed of any one seeing me dance. And another time, she said she liked a summer evening's dance in the open air much better than a winter's ball ; and the night before last, as we were coming away, she told Miss Darwin she intended very shortly to invite a small number of Laura's young friends, and she hoped she would consent to join the party.

Ellen. But if your mamma really went to speak to young Hilcox the day you suppose, I do not see why the dance should have been put off so long.

Laura. Nor I neither ; only, you know, she might wait for a moon.

The delights of the dance were canvassed for some time, till Ellen observed, with a smile, that they seemed to have thoroughly arranged every particular ; and added, that she was grieved to think that, after all, such a pretty plan was but an airy castle.

'You never will enter into any of my fancies, Ellen,' exclaimed Laura, peevishly. 'Tell me yourself, what do you suppose my mamma left me for in that unaccountable manner ?'

Ellen. Indeed I did not know; but I dare say for nothing that concerns me.

Laura. I dare say, however, it concerns me. Therefore tell me, is there any one thing besides that I have mentioned, for which you can suppose it possible that she went to Mrs. Hilcox's?

Ellen. Yes, a great many.

Laura. Oh then tell me, Ellen; make haste; I want to know, of all things in the world.

Ellen. To buy something for your papa.

Laura. I do not think that is at all likely. I do not see anything that a man can want.

Ellen. The last time I was at your house he said, the root-stands were so shabby, he was ashamed of seeing them. Perhaps Mrs. Belfast bespoke a new pair to surprise him.

Laura. And does that account for her not taking me with her?

Ellen. Yes, she might intend to surprise you too.

Laura. Oh, I dare say, I should be as much pleased with the surprise of a pair of new root-stands, as with being in the secret from the very first!

Ellen. Well, then, she had a mind to play upon your curiosity.

Laura. A very kind motive, truly, that would have been! But however, Ellen, I can tell you, I am by no means curious. I know I am of an open temper, and I hate reserve; but I believe I am as little curious as anybody in other people's affairs.

'You not curious!' retorted Ellen, scornfully; 'you that are always miserable, if there is anything concealed from you! I wonder who is curious, if Laura Belfast is not!'

'I am not curious, I tell you,' returned Laura, in a high tone. 'My mamma might have bought everything in the shop, and I should not have cared, only I cannot bear to be put off with a false excuse, and to be treated with a want of confidence.'

Ellen. A mighty want of confidence, if your mamma had bought a pair of root-stands, and had not told you of them till they were sent home!

Laura. But I am sure she went away for something a great deal more important. And now, upon thinking of it again, I feel quite positive it was to carry something to Mrs. Hilcox ; for she sent us a basket of cherries the other day, and said they were the first she had gathered. She never did such a thing before, and it is very plain she would not now, if she had not had some particular cause to be grateful.

Ellen. I see nothing so very surprising in that. She gave me a canary-bird last summer, and I am sure I never did anything to oblige her. But you perhaps may puzzle away and find some mystery in it.

Laura. Well, Miss Ellen, I'll take care not to open my mind to you another time.

Ellen. A great loss I shall have, Miss Laura, if all you have to tell me is as important as that your mamma went into a shop.

Laura was going to reply with much bitterness, when she received a hasty summons into the parlour, where her father was waiting to conduct her home. She coolly wished her friend good-night, and they parted with mutual dissatisfaction.

CHAPTER V.

VARIOUS INQUIRIES.

WHEN Laura arose the next morning, she determined, in the course of the day, to put such questions to her mother, as should oblige her to unravel the whole mystery. After a good deal of thought she began by saying, with apparent carelessness as they sat at work, 'Do not you think, mamma, it would be a good plan to let Mrs. Hilcox have some of those shirts to make?' 'Mrs. Hilcox, my dear!' exclaimed Mrs. Belfast, in a voice of surprise. 'Yes,' answered Laura ; 'she and her daughter might find time for work of an evening, and it would be such a charity to employ them !'

Mrs. Belfast. You certainly must be better acquainted

with their affairs, Laura, than I am, if you know them to be in straitened circumstances.

‘You do not know them to be in distress?’ said Laura, looking archly in her mother’s face, with a smile of triumph at the idea how much Mrs. Belfast would be disconcerted, when she found that her secret was discovered.

‘No indeed, my dear,’ returned Mrs. Belfast, ‘I do assure you I have not the smallest suspicion of it. Pray, Laura, may I inquire what gave rise to the idea?’

Laura. Oh! I had no reason for it; only, you know, she lost her husband very lately; and did not you once say something very like it?

Mrs. Belfast. You might very probably hear me pity her for the loss of her husband; but, so far from his having left her in pecuniary distress, I believe Mr. Hilcox had been remarkably successful; and since his death everybody seems to make it a point to continue to deal with her. Her children, you know, are most of them grown up, and I believe settled very much to her satisfaction; so that I rather think, Laura, she would feel herself affronted at my offering her plain-work.

‘What do you think could be her motive,’ inquired Laura, after a pause, ‘in sending you that basket of cherries the other day?’

Mrs. Belfast. To show a pleasing mark of attention to a neighbour and a good customer. It did not strike me as anything very extraordinary.

Laura blushed at the recollection of her positiveness and warmth the preceding evening. After a silence of some time, she inquired of her mother when she would give her leave to invite Miss Darwin and the other young ladies she had mentioned.

Mrs. Belfast. Next Thursday, my love, if nothing happens to prevent.

Laura. And how shall we contrive to entertain them, mamma?

Mrs. Belfast. You may either have a ramble in the gardens, or look at prints, or play at traveller, or do anything else they seem best to like. I cannot say I feel under

any apprehensions that five or six little girls will not know how to amuse themselves.

Laura. Does not Mrs. Hilcox's son play very well on the violin?

Mrs. Belfast. I believe he does.

Laura. Do you know what he charges for playing for an evening?

Mrs. Belfast. No, indeed, I do not exactly; but I believe about half a guinea.

Laura, after in vain allowing her mother time to make the expected proposal, ventured to inquire if she had not some intention of giving their visitors a dance upon the lawn, and sending for Mr. Hilcox to play to them.

Mrs. Belfast smiled. No my dear, said she, I cannot say I have ever had a thought of the kind. If, when your friends are here, you are all disposed for a hop, I will play to you on the piano with great pleasure; but as for sending for a fiddler, and giving a regular dance, I cannot agree to that.

Laura, abashed and disappointed, sighed, on considering that, as all her other fancies had now been contradicted, there was the more probability of her fancy relating to school being well founded.

When once the mind has adopted an idea, however ridiculous it may be in itself, the most indifferent circumstance is arrested to confirm it. In the course of the afternoon a lady, who accidentally called, inquired of Mrs. Belfast, if she had not proposed that her daughter should learn music of Mr. Fleming a gentleman who taught several families in the neighbourhood. 'I did talk of it once,' replied Mrs. Belfast; 'but I am not sufficiently satisfied with Mr. Fleming's style of playing. Laura will learn music soon; but it will be of another master who has been greatly recommended to me by a lady of my acquaintance.' Laura eagerly inquired his name; but as her mamma could not recollect it, she instantly set it down for granted, that the lady alluded to was Mrs. Darwin, and that the person she had recommended was the master who taught at Mrs. Hutchinson's school.

CHAPTER VI.

A SERIOUS ALARM.

THE following Thursday a large party of young folks assembled at Mr. Belfast's. Mr. and Mrs. Belfast formed a variety of plans for their diversion, and Laura was the only one who did not enjoy the evening. Soon after Miss Darwin came she contrived privately to ask her, if her mamma had lately called at their lodgings. 'She was so good as to come herself yesterday, to give me an invitation for this evening,' replied Miss Darwin.

'But can you recollect,' inquired the inquisitive Laura, 'whether she called yesterday week, about half-past two, and staid an hour with you? I have particular reasons for asking.'

'I know she called one morning,' answered Maria, 'about a week ago; but I cannot recollect the day.'

'I hope, you will forgive me for seeming to be so impertinent; but pray, did she say anything about your school?'

'I remember my aunt Hutchinson was mentioned; but I did not hear much, for my mother soon sent me out of the room.'

Every fear of Laura was now confirmed. She felt that she could not have asked another question without bursting into tears; and though, in general, no one engaged in play with greater spirit, her heart was this evening so saddened at the thought of leaving home, that she heartily rejoiced when the hour came for her visitors' departure.

Before they went away, she obtained permission of her mamma to invite Ellen Green, who was one of the party, to spend the next day with her, as Mrs. Belfast had a particular engagement in town. 'And then, my dear Ellen,' she faltered out as she walked with her to the gate, 'I will open my whole mind to you; for, indeed, indeed, I am very unhappy.'

When Laura found herself in bed, secure from observation, she gave free vent to her grief. The parting scene she painted in the most dismal colours, and anticipated every

feeling that would wring her heart, when at a distance from those she loved. Happily, however, she soon forgot her sorrows, and in less than an hour cried herself to sleep.

She awoke the next morning greatly refreshed by the slumbers of the night. Should she be sent to school, her sorrows, she began to think, might admit of more alleviations than the evening before she had imagined possible; but she was willing to hope she had been too easily alarmed. The conversation of her parents at breakfast contributed to restore her to her usual spirits; and by degrees she looked forwards with the idea of laughing with Ellen at her self-made affliction, when an incident occurred that plunged her again into the most direful distress.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PROSPECT OF PARTING.

MRS. Belfast was on the point of setting off, when a servant brought her a letter, which she hastily opened, to see if it required an answer. Laura's usual curiosity made her extremely impatient to know from whom it came; but her mother, whose attention was engaged by the letter, for some time gave no answer to her repeated inquiries; till, as she was locking it up in the desk, she replied, 'From Mrs. Hutchinson;' and then, as her carriage was waiting, she hastily ran downstairs, not allowing time to the overpowered girl to inquire an explanation.

'Oh dear! oh dear!' exclaimed Laura, 'what will become of me?' and flinging herself into a sofa, she gave way to the most passionate expressions of grief. She was in this situation when Ellen entered the room, and eagerly inquired what was the matter. Laura, redoubling her sobs, grasped her hand, and hid her face in her bosom. The tears started to the eyes of Ellen, and her voice failed her, as she endeavoured to soothe her friend, in whose grief she already sympathised, though she knew not its cause. At last the unhappy Laura sobbed out, that she was really going to school.

'Are you quite sure of it?' cried Ellen, bursting into

tears; 'has your mamma told you so?' Then, putting her arms round her waist, she clung to her, as if fearful she should lose her that moment.

As Laura grew, in some degree, more composed, she related in an incoherent manner, all her reasons for supposing that it was finally settled she should be sent to Mrs. Hutchinson's.

The day was spent in mutual lamentations. Miss Belfast declared she should not have an easy moment till she returned to Kensington; and Ellen, with equal sincerity, maintained she could never be happy while her dear Laura was away. They both bitterly reproached themselves for their foolish dispute the last time they were alone together. 'How could we,' exclaimed Ellen, 'quarrel about such a trifle! we that do love each other so dearly!'

'What a threat was mine,' said Laura, 'that I would not open my heart to you again! Oh! my dear Ellen, how miserable shall I be when I cannot tell you all my thoughts as I have been used to do!'

'When you are gone,' rejoined Ellen, in a mournful tone, 'what shall I not be willing to give for one hour with you! and we spoiled,' she continued, again bursting into tears, 'one of the last evenings we may have together.'

Sometimes the conversation took a more cheerful turn. They agreed upon a strict correspondence, felt a momentary delight at the idea of the number of anecdotes they should have to communicate, and dwelt with rapture on their meeting at Christmas.

In the evening, as they were waiting in Mrs. Belfast's dressing-room till Ellen should be sent for, again talking over all the circumstances that had occasioned the dismal supposition, 'Dear Laura,' said Ellen, 'after all I am half inclined to hope you may be mistaken. Might not your mamma have said Mrs. Hutchins, or Mrs. Hudson, and you have mistaken it for Hutchinson?'

'O that it might be so!' exclaimed Laura, clasping her hands together. 'What would I not give for one peep at the letter! It is the top thing in this desk that we are lolling upon; and this is the key,' added she, selecting one from a

bunch of keys which she had been for some time twisting about in her fingers, and which Mrs. Belfast, in her hurry, had left upon the table.

Ellen was silent, and Laura felt ashamed of having even hinted at a mean action. 'I hope my mamma,' said she, 'will come into my room, as she usually does, before she goes to bed. I am sure I shall be awake, and then I will ask her everything.'

'I wish I could know before I go home,' said Ellen, with a sigh. 'I have been thinking there may be more than one Mrs. Hutchinson in the world.'

Laura. Well, there can be no harm in just looking at the letter to see the postmark. Do you think there can, Ellen?

Ellen. I do not know. It does not seem to me quite right.

Laura. Nor to me neither. Well, then, we will let it alone. But it would be such a satisfaction only to look at the outside of the letter; because, you know, if it has not the Norwich postmark, we may make ourselves quite easy. So saying, she unlocked the desk. The postmark was so carelessly stamped as to be wholly illegible. It plainly, however, began with an N, and the size of the word could leave little doubt for what it was intended.

'I must,' said the trembling girl, 'just look to see if there is a date inside. I need not read another word, you know.'

'Stop, Laura,' cried Ellen; you said 'you would not open it.'

'Nay, Ellen, there can be no more harm in that than in looking at the outside of the letter. I must, and I will see if it comes from Mrs. Hutchinson the schoolmistress.' On opening the letter, the first word that met her eye was Norwich, and by a second glance she perceived that it began in the following manner: 'I am delighted to find, my dear madam, that you were satisfied in the inquiries you made of Mrs. Darwin——' Laura gave a shriek, and tossed the letter from her; then, wringing her hands, she walked backwards and forwards in an agony of distress. Ellen, after vainly endeavouring to soothe her friend, threw herself

upon a chair, and, hiding her face in her handkerchief, gave free vent to her tears. At this moment Nanny entered the room, and told Miss Green that her servant waited for her below.

They then took as solemn a parting as if they had been certain of not meeting for months; and when her friend was gone, Laura remained for some time lost in anguish.

At length the fallen letter caught her attention, and she picked it up in order to replace it in the desk. Again she examined the word *Norwich*. 'I may as well,' thought she, 'read the rest of the letter, only just to see what it says about me.' The conscience of Laura, which already reproached her for having acted meanly, opposed this determination; but after a short debate with herself, her impatience conquered her better principles, and, with an anxious mind, she perused the whole.

The beginning sentence only renewed her distress; but how much was she overjoyed to find that all the rest related to some business with which she was unacquainted, and that not a syllable had any reference to herself!

Her transport at this discovery for a time prevented her from considering the impropriety of her conduct; but as her joy by degrees abated, the idea of meanness became painful to her, and she dreaded her mother's just displeasure in case of detection. She therefore, with much care, replaced the letter exactly as she had found it, and strove to put the keys on the very same spot on which they had been left by Mrs. Belfast.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAURA'S REMORSE.

MISS BELFAST's sensations the next morning, on the idea of meeting her parents, were very different from those she usually experienced after a day's separation. She was sensible she merited their anger, and that if they treated her with their accustomed tenderness, it could only proceed from their ignorance of her behaviour. Impressed with these feelings, she loitered in her own room till breakfast was

half over; and when she went down, she seated herself at a corner of the table, with an embarrassment their presence seldom excited.

'Well, Laura,' inquired her mamma, 'had you a very lively day yesterday with Ellen Green?'

'I do not know, mamma,' replied she, deeply colouring.

'You seem doubtful, my dear,' resumed her mother.

'Surely you did not engage in any dispute?'

'Oh, no! we never were better friends.'

'In what manner did you amuse yourselves?'

Laura's confusion now increased; and it was not without hesitation she answered, 'Part of the time we walked in the garden, and afterwards we talked.'

'Upon my word, two very sedate ladies! But I have some news for you, Laura, which I think will give you pleasure. I have engaged Mr. Brandini to teach you music, as soon as the Midsummer holidays are over. He is at present too much engaged with private scholars to have leisure to attend you.'

Laura, who would at all times have been delighted with the prospect of learning music, at this moment heard the news with particular pleasure, as it seemed to preclude the possibility of her being sent to Mrs. Hutchinson's. Happy, likewise, in an opportunity to avoid the former topic of conversation, she replied in the most animated terms, and warmly expressed her gratitude.

But though the cause of her late uneasiness was thus removed, she could not dwell without poignant regret on the distress in which, by her folly, her beloved Ellen was involved. Had her mamma been acquainted with it, she knew that she would readily have permitted her to have called upon her friend to quiet her fears; but she was afraid of hinting a wish to go to Mrs. Green's, lest her motive should be inquired into; and though the affection she bore her mother, and her natural openness of temper, made her often on the point of confessing her fault, yet her courage as constantly failed her, on the recollection of the extreme detestation Mrs. Belfast always expressed of every act that bordered upon meanness.

CHAPTER IX.

FRESH GAME STARTED.

A DAY or two after the vexations mentioned in the last chapter, when the cause that excited them was nearly forgotten, Laura was sitting with her parents in the bow-window of the saloon. Mr. Belfast was employed in looking over the newspaper, when suddenly leaning against the chair of his wife, and putting one arm round her waist, 'See, my dear,' said he, directing her eye to an advertisement, 'here is the very cottage we were wishing for, and exactly in the spot that Mrs. Darwin so much recommended for those who wished to retrench.'

Mrs. Belfast smiled. 'Indeed,' said she, 'I think there is no time to be lost.' 'What! what!' exclaimed Laura, skipping behind her parents in order to overlook the paper—'what is it you say, papa?'

'Your mother understood me, *ma petite curieuse*,' returned he, patting her on the head; 'I only alluded to a conversation we had the other evening.'

This answer did not satisfy the eager Laura, whose curiosity, once excited, was not easily suppressed; and from the above cursory mention of Mrs. Darwin, her quick imagination instantly connected the present mystery of the cottage, as she termed it, with the subject of her late perplexity. What strengthened her suspicions was an imperfect recollection of something to the following effect, in the letter of which she had clandestinely obtained a perusal: after a sentence she had totally forgotten, Mrs. Hutchinson added, 'that she felt herself truly concerned at the alteration in the circumstances of her friends; that the change must be keenly felt; but that she trusted their fortitude would enable them to bear with cheerfulness every sacrifice they should be compelled to make.' On reading this paragraph, Laura had paused for a moment to consider to whom it could allude; but her mind being then occupied by a more interesting subject, it had made but little impression. Now, however, she did not doubt but that her own parents were the friends spoken of by Mrs. Hutchinson.

The inquiries made of Mrs. Darwin, mentioned in the first sentence, she presumed, related to the situation of some place in the country; and though the contents of the rest of the letter had entirely slipped her memory, she felt certain they so plainly referred to the same circumstance, that she only wondered her penetration had not sooner made the discovery.

Laura waited impatiently till the newspaper was laid upon the table; when, taking it up, she ran over with eager haste the advertisements relating to houses.

After some consideration, she selected the following as the one her father had pointed out:

‘To be let, and entered upon at Michaelmas next, an eligible farm, known by the name of Clare Hall, delightfully situated in a romantic valley in the county of Devon, within ten miles of Exmouth; consisting of a small farmhouse, thatched, and neatly fitted up in the cottage style, together with a garden, orchard, and about 200 acres of arable and meadow land. Particulars may be had by applying, &c.’

That very evening Laura heard her father mention to a gentleman, that he should be absent from home for two or three weeks, as he intended accompanying a friend on a tour on the south-west coast. What could be stronger confirmation? Laura gave a significant smile, on the consciousness of being well acquainted with the motive of his journey; but it escaped the notice of Mr. Belfast. ‘I hope the house will not be taken; do not you, mamma?’ said she to her mother the next day.

‘What house, my dear?’

‘Why, that charming cottage in Devonshire my papa is going into the country to see after.’

‘What makes you suppose he has any such intention?’

‘Oh, I know very well. You need not pretend to hide it from me. Did not I see him point it out to you yesterday in the newspaper?’

‘And on that circumstance only have you contrived to form such a pretty story?’ said Mrs. Belfast.

Laura blushed, whose strongest reason for her conjecture was such as she dared not disclose. She was hesitating in

what manner to reply, when a loud ring at the bell, announcing the arrival of company, effectually prevented further inquiry.

Fearful of being again interrogated, she never ventured to renew the subject. A reserve to which she was so little accustomed cost her much ; but she endeavoured to atone for the silence she forced herself to observe towards her parents, by enlarging to every one else on the plans which occupied her thoughts.

‘ Oh, Nanny, Nanny,’ said she, the first opportunity, ‘ we are going to live in the country, a great way off, in a pretty little farm ; and we shall have horses, and cows, and sheep, and poultry, and everything you can think of ; and a nice orchard, and such plenty of fruit ! And I dare say there will be a pretty little pony for me to ride upon. Oh ! we shall be so happy,’ said she, skipping about, ‘ in our pretty cottage !’

‘ Your cottage !’ said Nanny.

‘ Yes, a nice little snug farmhouse, fitted up in the cottage style. It is in Devonshire. It is called Clare Hall.’

‘ And what is the meaning of this moving ?’ inquired Nanny.

Laura. I cannot tell you exactly ; but by what I can find out, I fancy my papa must have had great losses in trade, and so he thinks it better to go into the country, where he can live cheap.

Nanny. Great losses ! Does not that make you very uneasy ?

Laura. Oh dear, not at all. I am sure I shall enjoy myself a great deal more than I do now. We shall have my papa with us all day ; and he will have nothing to do but to see about the farm, and read to us when we are at work, and ride and walk with us.

Nanny. What servants does your mamma take with her ?

Laura. I dare say she will not take any, as we are going to save all the money we can. We shall hire a strong maid in the country, I suppose, to do the work of the house, and to wash ; and I shall help to churn, and take care of little Henry ; and we shall not want much washing ; for I shall not

often wear white frocks. My straw hat, tied under my chin with pink ribbons, will do very well for the country, you know; and I shall put a garland of natural flowers round to make me look like a shepherdess.

Nanny. What do you suppose will be done with the coach?

Laura. We certainly shall not take that with us.

Nanny. Why! it was new but a few months ago.

Laura. That does not signify; we shall get the more for it. It is very likely we shall have a country cart to ride about in. How often I have longed to ride in a cart!

Nanny. Well, I must inquire what my mistress means to do; for if I am to be turned off, it is time I should begin to look about me.

Laura. Pray, Nanny, do not say anything to mamma about it: she will not like I should have mentioned it to you. Besides, we cannot go before Michaelmas, and you know her well enough to be sure she will not turn you away unhandsomely. I do not know—perhaps she may take you along with us. Indeed, I know nothing for certain; for mamma has not said a word to me about it.

Nanny. What am I to believe, then, of all this fine story you have been telling me?

Laura. Oh, I have very good reasons for believing it to be all true, though I cannot exactly tell you what they are. I have heard my papa and mamma talking together; and, I believe, I can be pretty certain my papa is going into the country to settle about the house.

CHAPTER X.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE SAME SUBJECT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the rapture with which Laura thus dwelt on the scheme of retiring into the country, her heart almost failed her when, a few days after, she came to unfold the particulars to Ellen; she felt doubtful whether all the rural pleasures she had promised herself would counterbalance the pain she should feel on quitting her friend.

She had accidentally met her one evening, when she was

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walking with her father and mother, and had only time, in a whisper, to inform her that her fears, relating to school, were without foundation. This was all she saw of her from the mournful day the letter was opened till the afternoon of her father's departure for the country, when she was called by Mrs. Belfast to accompany her to Mrs. Green's.

'I am going to tell you a piece of news that will surprise you,' said Laura, the moment she was alone with her friend: 'I have now, Ellen, really found out the secret. I know the reason my mamma went to Mrs. Hilcox's. It was to make inquiries of Mrs. Darwin, but not about school.'

'What is the matter now?' said Ellen, half affrighted at Laura's manner, which seemed to imply a certainty that what she had to communicate would afflict her friend, though she herself hardly knew whether to be pleased or not.

Laura. Do not frighten yourself so, Ellen; I shall be afraid of telling you, if you do. It is only that I fancy my papa is going to take a house.

Ellen. A house?—Where?—How? You are not going to leave Kensington, are you?

Laura. I fancy we shall soon, but certainly not before Michaelmas. Now, my dear girl, do not tremble in this way, and I'll tell you all about it. We are going to Clare Hall, a charming cottage, just such a one I fancy, by the description, as you and I have often wished to live in. It is in a valley in Devonshire, a delightful romantic part of the country.

'In Devonshire!' said Ellen, bursting into tears.

Laura. Dear Ellen, do not disturb yourself so. I shall be sorry I have said anything to you on the subject. I dare say your mamma will give you leave to come down with us, and we shall keep you three or four months, and then you know we shall be together the whole day, and take so many new walks. Besides, we shall be within ten miles of Exmouth, and that is by the seaside; and you know how long you have wished to see the sea.

'Ah, Laura!' said Ellen with a sigh, 'how differently you talk of a separation now, from what you did the last time we were together.'

Laura. To be sure, when you have left me, I shall not

enjoy anything so much ; but then I shall hope to see you again the next summer ; and I assure you I mean to come and stay with you very often, so that we shall see more of each other than we have ever done before.

Ellen. But that is very different from being able to pop in and out when we please. But tell me, Laura, do you really know all you are saying to be true, or are you again making a fool of me with one of your fancies !

Laura. No, this time I am sure I am not mistaken. My papa set off to-day to see after the house.

Ellen. Did he tell you so ?

Laura. No, he did not tell me so, but I am certain of it for all that.

Ellen. How are you certain of it ? My dear friend, do not keep me in suspense.

Laura. Now you are a little better, I will not.

She then exactly related every circumstance that had occurred, from the time of her reading Mrs. Hutchinson's letter to the present moment, as her raised imagination, and fondness for the marvellous, would admit.

'Oh, if this is all the reason you have for supposing you are going away,' said Ellen, 'I think I need not make myself very uneasy. How improbable if your father and mother found themselves in reduced circumstances, that they should talk to Mrs. Darwin, and write to Mrs. Hutchinson, about it !

Laura. No, not at all improbable. I'll tell you how I have settled it. Though they are not very intimate with Mrs. Darwin, yet I know they have a great respect for her ; and as she has travelled all over England, when they wished to retire into some cheap country, it was very likely they should ask her opinion upon the subject. And as Mrs. Darwin travelled with Mrs. Hutchinson, what could be more natural than that she should write to her and say, 'What part of the country, sister, do you think we found the cheapest ? Do not you think Devonshire would be best for a small family that wishes to retire upon a saving plan ?'

Ellen. And this accounts for Mrs. Hutchinson, an entire stranger, writing to your mamma !

Laura. She is not an entire stranger, as I have found out since I saw you. She and mamma were schoolfellows, and used to be very intimate when they were young.

Ellen. But was there anything in the letter about Devonshire?

Laura. Indeed I hardly know; I read it in such a hurry, and was in such agitation of mind. But this I very well remember, that Mrs. Hutchinson said, she was very sorry my mamma should be in low circumstances.

Ellen. The letter said that your mamma was in low circumstances!

Laura. It did not say those very words, but something quite to that purpose. I know it meant the same thing.

Ellen. But have you any other reasons for believing this sad story?

Laura. Everything that has passed since confirms it more and more. Nanny told me yesterday that cook said she was not at all surprised on hearing we were grown poor; for mamma had seemed very stingy lately; and had said a great deal about the butter and meat being wasted.

Ellen. But, Laura, how very much you are to blame to talk to the servants about what you have reason to believe your mamma wishes not to be known.

Laura. If my mamma placed confidence in me, my dear, she should find that I could keep a secret as well as any body; but as she has not thought fit to do that, I am under no tie whatever; I am at full liberty to tell any body what I can find out.

Ellen. Well, Laura, go on with your proofs.

Laura. The night you met us walking on the Hammer-smith road, a man passed in a cart and asked if we would ride. 'No, thank you, my friend,' said my papa; and then turning to mamma, he said, 'When we are in the country, my dear, if we are tired, we shall not refuse such an offer.' And yesterday, when he had Henry in his arms, he said, 'Why, you chubby-faced boy, you are quite fit for the farmer;' and then he looked at my mamma, and they smiled as if they understood each other very well.

Ellen. And these, Laura, are all your reasons?

Laura. No ; I have one stronger than all the rest, but I am ashamed of telling you that.

Ellen. How so ? Surely you are not afraid of my knowing it ?

Laura. Indeed I am, but I suppose I shall not be able to keep it from you. Mrs. Darwin called this morning. As we do not often see her, I quite fancied she was come upon business, and I was going to run into the parlour, when my mamma insisted upon my staying in the study till I had finished learning my lesson. You may be sure I made haste ; and I was hurrying downstairs, when I heard Mrs. Darwin and my mamma in earnest conversation ; so I stopped a few minutes at the door, to try if I could learn any more particulars.

Ellen. Oh fie, Laura ! I should not have thought you would have done such a thing !

Laura. No more I would, if my mamma would but be a little more confidential ; but it is such an abominable thing for a mother to be talking to a stranger about what she conceals from her own daughter.

Ellen. That does not excuse you. But do, pray, let me know whether you heard anything more relating to this terrible moving ?

Laura. Yes a great deal. I first heard Mrs. Darwin say, 'It is a sweet place.' My mamma then seemed to be making inquiries about Clare Hall, and Mrs. Darwin answered that to be sure it was small for our family, but very convenient ; and then she said something about being cheerful under a reverse of fortune ; and my mamma said, 'I am perfectly convinced that riches are not essential to happiness.' Those I remember were her words. I do not know what came next ; but afterwards Mrs. Darwin said, she should make a point of calling if she came into that part of the country ; and, from what I could hear, my mamma said she should be glad to see her, and pressed her to stay with us ; and then I thought I heard somebody on the stairs, so I bounced into the room ; and I was so angry with them, for, on my going in, the conversation was changed in a moment.

Ellen. I was very unwilling to believe what you have been telling me, but I am afraid you are but too much in the right. However, there is one thing that gives me some hopes. Do you think if this was the case, you would be beginning to learn music?

Laura. I think that very circumstance makes my supposition the more probable. If I was going to stay at Kensington, perhaps I should not have begun music so soon, and certainly not of such a capital master. But now my mamma wants me to be well grounded, and then she will go on instructing me herself. We shall take the piano into the country, and I intend to be very accomplished.

Ellen. I shall inquire this evening what my mother has heard from Mrs. Belfast.

Laura. No, pray, Ellen, do not say a syllable about what I have told you.

Ellen. Why not? Have you not spoken of it openly to the servants?

Laura. But if your mamma should ask you, as mine did me, how I came to know so much of the affair, you would be obliged to tell her of my opening the letter, and listening at the door; and what an opinion would that give Mrs. Green of me! I know I have behaved very wrong, and I feel quite ashamed of myself, but I would not have it come round to my mamma, or indeed have anybody know it but you, for all the world.

Ellen. Well, I will not betray you; I will only mention it to my cousin Sidney, and I am sure she will make no particular inquiries.

CHAPTER XI.

A FINAL EXPLANATION IN VIEW.

FOR some days after the conversation related in the last chapter, Laura was scarcely a moment separated from her mother, so that she had no opportunity of having a private conversation, even with Nanny. Not being able to talk of her airy castles, she began likewise by degrees to think less of them.

Mr. Brandini, to her no small delight, having unexpectedly a day's leisure, called to give her her first lesson. She felt herself much interested in the distresses of a poor family, whom she went with her mother to visit, and on her return home she immediately set about making clothes for the children. Her time and thoughts thus busily engaged, her mind scarcely dwelt for a moment upon the country scheme, till one day, as her mother was going upstairs after dinner, she told her she should be busy writing for an hour, 'but at six o'clock,' said she, 'you may come into my dressing-room, and then I will unfold to you the mystery of my going to Mrs. Hilcox's, which at the time I remember appeared a good deal to perplex you. It was not then in my power to explain my motive for leaving you; but as I am now at liberty to satisfy every inquiry, my Laura shall not find that her mother treats her with unnecessary reserve.'

The joy, the rapture, with which Laura would naturally have received this promise, was embittered by the consciousness that she was undeserving of her mother's generosity; and by the dread lest such questions should be put to her, in the course of their conversation, as would oblige her to discover the meanness of which she was heartily ashamed. By degrees, however, her natural vivacity and turn for invention prevailed over her remorse; and not admitting a doubt of the truth of her last supposition she gave herself up to the warmest delight, on the near prospect of her plans being realised. Mrs. Belfast had that morning received a letter from her husband. Laura had observed her peruse it with eagerness. What could it contain but the tidings that the house was taken? How great would be her joy, when she could dwell upon every circumstance with her mamma, who had promised to answer all her inquiries!

Already she saw the thatched-roof cottage embowered among the trees, screened by hills from the northern blast; the shrubbery of roses and eglantine in which she should delight to wander; the sheep grazing on the downs to the south; while a distant view of the sea bounded the ideal prospect.

One consideration only was painful, that the time must come when her Ellen would be obliged to leave her; but nothing was difficult to the fertile imagination of Laura. Mr. and Mrs. Green both liked the country, and when their daughter returned she would give such a description of Devonshire, as would soon induce them to follow their old friends into retirement; and the view of their habitation, not a quarter of a mile distant, served to embellish the landscape her fancy had before delineated.

She was employed in making a little gown for one of the poor children above alluded to; and her benevolent heart instantly dictated the good she should do in the neighbourhood to which she was going. The clock struck six as she was in imagination surrounded by a group of cottage children, to whom she had taken upon herself the office of instructress.

She flew like lightning to her mother's door, but paused for a moment, with her hand upon the lock, withheld from entering by the dread of examination, and the consciousness of guilt.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MYSTERY DISCLOSED.

MRS. BELFAST, on her daughter's entrance, laid aside her writing, and seating herself by her, thus began: 'Not to keep you in suspense, my only motive for going to Mrs. Hilcox's was to purchase a pound of wax.'

Laura. A pound of wax! Dear mamma, is it possible? Then why did you make such a mystery of it?

Mrs. Belfast. I had promised to buy it for the lame Miss Herbert, who wished to make some wax ornaments for her chimney-piece; but as she had been several times laughed at for not succeeding in her experiments, she particularly begged me not to mention it to any one till the work was completed; and that being now the case, there is no longer any occasion for secrecy.

Laura. And why were you gone such an age? and who were the people of my acquaintance whom you saw?

Mrs. Belfast. Three or four customers were in the shop

when I went in, and, as they appeared to be in a hurry I waited till they were served. The wax was by accident mislaid, and it was some time before it could be found; and afterwards they were obliged to send out for change.

Laura. And who was with you all that time? You said you saw somebody you knew.

Mrs. Belfast. Yes, Mrs. Hilcox, and her son and daughter, who were in the shop; and the biscuit baker, who passed by with two or three of his children.

'And this was all, mamma?' said Laura, abashed at the recollection of her folly.

Mrs. Belfast. The whole, Laura. And now, having gratified your curiosity, I have a claim upon you to satisfy mine. Tell me, therefore, on what foundation you have raised the report, from which it is concluded, that your mother's extravagance and your father's gaming have ruined their family?

Laura. Who can have said such a thing? What a story! I am sure, mamma—how can any body—I never had such a thought in my life.

Mrs. Belfast. I will give you my authority. Mrs. Norton called this morning

Laura. Mrs. Norton! Has she dared. . . .

Mrs. Belfast. Allow me to proceed. Mrs. Norton told me, that she was in a large company last night, where it was publicly mentioned that our fortune was so exhausted, that we were under the necessity of immediately retiring into the country. (Laura's confusion now betrayed that she was not wholly ignorant of the ground of her mother's accusation.) The very place was mentioned (continued Mrs. Belfast). A small cottage in Devonshire, known by the name of Clare Hall, with about an acre or two of ground, was the retreat in which we were to hide ourselves from the pursuit of our creditors.

Mrs. Norton, as my intimate friend, ventured to contradict the assertion, and maintained that, on the terms we were upon, no such plan would have been formed without her knowledge. All she could urge was, however, only laughed at as pretended ignorance. Every one had the

strongest reasons to believe that we intended immediately to quit Kensington.

And your father's journey to the south was alleged as an undoubted confirmation of the report. Some traced it from the very servants of the family. One lady named Miss Sidney as her informant, who had heard the news at her uncle Green's, and the intimate connection of his family with the Belfasts rendered this evidence unquestionable. The fact thus established, each one was at liberty to form her own conclusions. Mrs. Ward observed, that she was not in the least surprised at what she had heard. Mr. Belfast was much to be pitied, for his wife had a turn for expense that would outrun the largest fortune; as instances of which she adduced my grand piano and the new greenhouse which had lately been built under my direction. 'For that matter,' said Miss Harris, 'their style of living certainly cannot exceed their income. It is well known that Mr. Belfast is in a capital way of business, and his father left him a very handsome fortune. I can therefore only account for it by supposing him to have ruined himself by gaming; and in that case I feel most for his wife.' 'I begin to be alarmed,' said Mrs. Hermes, who had not before heard the report. 'I must put Mr. Hermes on his guard, for I know he is engaged with Mr. Belfast for very large sums.' They then all joined in condemning us, for bringing up our daughter as if she had large expectations, when it would most probably be necessary for her to work for her subsistence. Our cheerfulness was attributed to insensibility; and one lady maliciously insinuated, that it was easy for those to be charitable who did not scruple defrauding their creditors.

'Oh dear! oh dear!' said Laura, clasping her hands together.

'Mrs. Norton, determined to discover the origin of the report,' continued Mrs. Belfast, 'called this morning on Mrs. Green, but as she was not able to give her the least information, she desired to speak with Ellen.'

'And did Ellen betray me?' exclaimed Laura.

Mrs. Belfast. Ellen replied that her friend Laura had

certainly good reasons for believing that her parents intended to remove into the country; but what those reasons were, she was in honour bound to conceal. Mrs. Norton then inquired whether the scheme had been long in agitation; to which Ellen answered, that it was about three weeks since Mrs. Belfast, in an airing with her daughter, had suddenly stopped the coach, and in a very mysterious manner had gone to Mrs. Hilcox's; and that there was every reason to suppose, she had then been to consult Mrs. Darwin on the subject.

And now, Laura, tell me, could you, on so slight a circumstance, fabricate the story which has been spread through the neighbourhood?

'Mamma,' said Laura, as audibly as she could, 'I will tell you the truth. O how I wish I had never kept anything from you!'

In as coherent a manner as her agitation would permit, she then related every circumstance which had occasioned her various suppositions, without in the least degree palliating the faults of which she had been guilty. Ashamed of beholding her mother, she hid her face in her bosom as she concluded her narrative, softly adding, 'And now I am ready to submit to any punishment you shall think proper to inflict.'

'See, Laura!' said Mrs. Belfast, 'the sad consequences of indulging a restless curiosity. How often, when I have warned you against this propensity, have you exclaimed, "Dear mamma, surely curiosity is not such a great fault!" but I hope what has now occurred will make a more forcible impression than all the lessons I have endeavoured to inculcate.'

'I went to a shop to purchase a trifling article, and neither took you with me, nor told you what I had bought. This was the intricate mystery which has produced such a complicated train of errors and disasters.'

'Offended that a single circumstance should be concealed from your knowledge, you were out of humour during the whole ride. The very idea which restored you to cheerfulness was the occasion of a mortifying disappointment;

and you remember the accident which was produced by your impatience to get a sight of the present which you imagined I had procured for you. With all her faults, my Laura has a disposition so affectionate, that I can easily fancy what must have been her feelings, when she imagined that she was shortly about to leave her friends. But how entirely without reason did you imbibe this distressing idea ! When I mentioned Mrs. Hutchinson at Mrs. Darwin's, which you would not have known had you not made such impertinent inquiries of Maria, it was merely to ask after her health. When Miss Darwin was sent out of the room, I had some conversation with her mother respecting a gentleman in reduced circumstances, for whom she wished your father to procure a place in the bank ; and it was on the same subject that I received the letter from her sister, which occasioned you so much disturbance. You seem so sensible of the impropriety of your behaviour in opening that letter, that it is unnecessary for me to enlarge upon it, further than to remark it as an instance of the baneful effects of a foible, which could lead to the commission of so base and dishonourable an action.

‘ You may fancy that, on first reading the letter, you were rather rewarded than punished, as it served immediately to remove your distress ; but had you possessed sufficient command over yourself, to wait with patience till you could talk to me upon the subject, your fears would have been equally removed, and all those evils might have been avoided, which have arisen in consequence of the supposition which the letter gave you. There is no incident too trifling to afford food for curiosity. Your father at the time explained the true motive of his pointing out the advertisement ; he merely alluded to a joke we had had a day or two before, when we had been fancying the pleasures of a retired life. Again ; he had not any motive for his journey except to see that part of the country, which was entirely new to him. And the conversation between Mrs. Darwin and me, which you have made so interesting, merely related to some French nuns who are settled in Suffolk, and on whom Mrs. Darwin said she intended to call the next time she went to stay

with her sister. From these circumstances, trifling as they were in themselves, and wholly independent of each other, added to my supposed mysterious visit to Mrs. Darwin, you not only formed in your own mind, but sent abroad into the world, the story which has circulated to our disadvantage. In this life the guilty can seldom suffer alone. Your poor Ellen, how has she been the victim of her affection for you, and your various fancies ! and how much is your father's and my character sunk in the neighbourhood, by the report that has been so widely spread !'

Laura, who had not been able to refrain from tears on the mention of Ellen, now in sobbing accents exclaimed, 'But, my dear mamma, though I have been much to blame, you should not lay to my charge all that those ladies so wickedly said against you. Do you suppose that I ever thought you had been extravagant, and my papa a gamester?'

Mrs. Belfast. It is not for you, Laura, who have taken such unwarrantable liberties, in openly relating a story respecting your own parents, which you yourself imagined they wished to be kept secret, to be severe upon strangers who, when they hear it as they fancy upon such undoubted authority, venture to ascribe those motives for the determination, which appear to them the most probable. I do not, however, wholly justify the party in question ; and we may observe from this instance, how extremely cautious we should be in believing reports of our neighbours, and in commenting upon them to their disadvantage. A disposition to tattling, which has been so often ascribed to women, that for the honour of our sex we should be particularly on our guard against it, generally accompanies curiosity. Those who fancy they have discovered a secret are too proud of their penetration to let it be concealed ; or else they tell what they know, that in so doing they may have an opportunity of making further inquiries.

Laura. I am sure, mamma, whenever you have told me a secret, I have been very careful not to divulge it ; but I thought, where no confidence was reposed, no secrecy could be expected.

Mrs. Belfast. You have a very imperfect notion of honour, Laura, if such can be your opinion. In the present case, I could tell you nothing, for there was nothing to tell; but it may occasionally happen, that we may have good reasons for wishing to conceal an affair from all the world, which you, by being constantly with us, may in part discover. But shall you deal generously, shall you deal kindly by your parents, if you run the risk of doing them a real injury, by relating what you know, as a kind of punishment to them for not having entrusted you with the whole?

Laura. Indeed I will be more careful. But do not you sometimes say that you hate secrets, and that you like an open temper?

Mrs. Belfast. I do hate unnecessary secrets, and an affection of mystery; but I never pretended to say, there were no cases in which concealment was needful. Openness is not more essential to friendship, than an indiscriminate communicativeness is prejudicial to it. No one would choose to fix upon that person as a friend, who does not consider in almost as sacred a light the discoveries which her situation enables her to make, as those secrets which are more immediately entrusted to her fidelity.

Laura. How very, very sorry, I am for the mischief I have done! What can I do to repair it?

Mrs. Belfast. As the mistake is so soon discovered, I am in hopes our reputation will not receive any permanent injury. I shall inform Mrs. Norton in what manner the report originated, and request her to undeceive her friends.

Laura. Oh! what an opinion will they have of me!

Mrs. Belfast. Can you, in justice, wish them to continue in their present error?

Laura. Oh no! that is true; and if any body should ask me about our moving, I will certainly own the truth. But how ashamed I shall feel! I shall be ashamed of seeing my dear Ellen too, after having frightened her a second time about our parting. Oh! my dear mamma, do you think I shall ever recover my character?

Mrs. Belfast. I will not, my dear, deceive you, by saying that it will not suffer by what has happened. It will long

be remembered that Laura Belfast was capable of meanness and treachery.

And as we have seen that a story is seldom simply told, you must not be surprised if what has passed should be related with many aggravations. Yet by a steady course of good behaviour you will, I hope, in time regain the good opinion of your acquaintance. And I do flatter myself that my Laura, instructed by what has now passed, will exert her utmost endeavours to correct her greatest fault, and then she will be almost all that my fondest affection could desire.

Laura flung her arms about her mother's neck. 'I will, I will try to be all you can wish me. But by what means can I get the better of my curiosity? I know the first time I think there is a secret, I shall be in as great a fidget as ever. And how can I help it?'

Mrs. Belfast. When you would restrain any undue propensity, your first recourse must be to Heaven. Let it be one subject of your daily addresses to that God, who has promised to strengthen our weakness, and aid every virtuous endeavour, that he would enable you to overcome this your prevailing foible. And when you feel yourself on the point of losing your temper, because you cannot immediately discover what you wish, then, in a mental ejaculation, implore the Almighty to calm that eagerness which is so contrary to the spirit of Christianity.

Do not suppose that curiosity is such a trifle, as to stand in no need of being combated by divine grace. Nothing is a trifle which leads the way to vice. When you fancy that the secret relates to yourself, endeavour to attain a degree of calmness by reflecting that all your concerns are in the hands of an Infinite Protector who will unravel to you, as he sees fit, the hidden events of futurity.'

When the secret relates to your friends, strive to suppress the painful idea that they do not love you, because they do not confide to you all their concerns. Remember that you are but a child, and that your judgment must of course be unformed. As you grow older, we shall certainly have less to conceal; but at any age it would be unfair,

from an occasional instance of reserve, which might perhaps be unavoidable, to suspect the sincerity of our affection. As to that foolish habit of prying into the affairs of neighbours and common acquaintance, on whose confidence you have no claim, and whose reserve you cannot pretend to say wounds your feelings, the best preservative I can recommend against it is a habit of constant employment. The wonders of nature open a wide field to the most inquisitive mind ; and your turn for invention, if properly directed, may prove to you a fund of real amusement. If by these means you cannot attain the inward serenity at which you aim, you may at least control your actions. You may, by exertion, keep yourself from being guilty of any breach of honour with a view to discover a secret.

Let me also recommend you, when again you feel yourself perplexed, to look back on the incident which has occasioned this conversation ; and you will say to yourself ‘ Well ! it is not worth while to distress myself ; perhaps the mighty mystery may only relate to a pound of wax.’

THE BLOSSOMS OF MORALITY.

GENEROSITY REWARDED.

OF all the graces that contribute to adorn the human mind, there are perhaps none more estimable than generosity and gratitude. To define the exact boundary between generosity and confusion is not perhaps easy, since every one will explain it by the ideas they have of their own motives for action ; yet how far soever avarice may have deprived some men of every spark of generosity, yet those very men fail not to expect it from others, and are sure to complain bitterly of those who do not display it in all their actions.

Nothing can equal the pleasure arising from the glow of a generous heart, which is prompted to a noble action solely from the love of virtue, and who wishes not to make of it a worldly parade. Fame is often purchased by generous donations, which would never have been given, had not popular idolatry been the main object in view ; while others, like the generous man in the following tale, consulted only the approbation of his own honest feelings.

One of the califfs of Egypt, being in the field of battle, was unexpectedly surrounded by a great number of rebels, who were preparing to give that fatal blow, which would at once have finished his life, and put an end to his mortal career. Fortunately for him, an Arab happened to be near the spot with other soldiers of his party, who seeing the situation of the califf, rushed upon the rebels, and attacked them with such fury, that they were all soon put to flight.

The name of this Arab was Nadir, who had for some months lived a wandering life in the most retired and unfrequented places, in order to escape the vengeance of the

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califf, against whom he had joined the people in a late insurrection.

This generous conduct of Nadir was so much admired by all the Arabians, that the sires still tell it their children among their evening tales. This adventure had the happy effect of perfectly reconciling Nadir to the califf, who, charmed with the generosity of a man who had saved his life, at the very instant he might have destroyed it, promised to place in him an implicit confidence. 'But,' said the califf, 'let me hear how you have passed your time during your state of banishment.'

'I have been a wandering fugitive,' replied Nadir, 'ever since your family were elevated to the throne of this empire; conscious that the sword of vengeance was at all times hanging over my head, it became natural for me to seek security in retirement. I found refuge for some time in the house of a friend at Basra; but fearing that my stay in that city might be dangerous, I one night quitted it under the favour of a disguise, and pursued my journey towards the desert.

'I had escaped the vigilance of the guards, and thought myself out of all danger, when a man of a suspicious countenance seized my camel's bridle, and expressed his suspicions, that I was the man the califf was in search of, and for the apprehension of whom a very considerable reward had been promised.

'I answered that I was not the man he was in quest of. "Is not your name Nadir?" said he. This disconcerted me, and I could no longer deny myself to be the object of his pursuit. I put my hand into my bosom, and pulling out a jewel of some value, "Receive," said I, "this trifling token of my gratitude, for the important service I hope you will now do me, in keeping silence, and favouring my escape. Should fortune again smile on me, I will share my prosperity with you."

'He took my diamond, and examined it very attentively. "Before I put this diamond into my turban, as your gift," said he, "I would wish you to answer me one question honestly. I have heard you have been a liberal man, and

always ready to assist the poor and necessitous; but did you ever give away one-half of your wealth at one time?" I answered in the negative, and he renewed his questions till he came down to one-tenth, when I replied, "That I believed I had, at one time, given away more than one-tenth of my whole fortune."

"If that be the case," said the man, as soon as I had made him that reply, "that you may know there is at least one person in the realm more bountiful than yourself, I, who am nothing better than a private soldier, and receive only two dollars per month, return you your jewel, which must certainly be worth three thousand times that money." Having thus said, he threw me back my diamond, and pursued his journey.

'Astonished at so benevolent and generous an action, I rode after him, and begged him to return. "Generous friend," said I to him, "I would rather be discovered, and forfeit my head, than be thus vanquished in point of generosity. Magnanimous stranger, either I must follow you all day, or you must accept of this tribute of my gratitude."

'He then turning about, said to me, "Were I to take from you your diamond, I should consider myself as a robber on the highway, since you receive no value for it. Let me advise you to lose no time, but make the best of your way to your proposed retreat." He continued inflexible, and we parted.'

The califf knew not which to admire most, the generosity of Nadir or the soldier. A proclamation was published, ordering the generous soldier to appear at the califf's court, that he might receive the reward of his virtues; but all was to no effect, as no one came forward to claim the glorious reward. However, about a twelvemonth afterwards, when Nadir attended the califf at a general review, a private soldier received a blow from his officer for holding down his head as the califf passed. This drew the attention of Nadir, who, after looking steadfastly in the face of the offending soldier, leaped from his horse, and caught him in his arms. To conclude, this proved to be the man who had so generously treated Nadir, and had endeavoured to shun the

reward of his virtues. The califf paid him singular honours on the spot, and at last raised him to the highest rank in his army.

THE ANXIETIES OF ROYALTY.

THE califfs of the East having extended their dominions as far as the boundaries of Europe, found their iron sceptre too heavy to be supported with any degree of pleasure or satisfaction. They therefore appointed what are called emirs; but each of these governors soon assumed the power of sultans. Not contented with the appearance of being equal to their master, they frequently arraigned his conduct, and sometimes dethroned him.

Mamoud was the most celebrated of all the califfs, who had kept their court at Ispahan. He was a patron of the arts and sciences, and naturally a friend to the blessings of peace. Some of his predecessors, however, had been of different sentiments, and thought their happiness and glory consisted only in warlike exploits, in the desolation of villages, towns, and cities, without regarding the horrible carnage of human beings, and the miseries to which thousands of families were thereby reduced. His subjects, being thus accustomed to warlike achievements, being naturally savage, and thinking nothing but a victorious hero fit to govern them, they rebelled against their peaceful monarch.

Though Mamoud wisely preferred peace to war, yet he was by no means destitute of true courage, and he now found himself under the disagreeable necessity of taking the field, as the only means of pacifying his rebellious subjects. His arms were everywhere victorious, and he returned in triumph to Ispahan, where he hoped to enjoy the fruits of his victories in peace and tranquillity.

In this, however, he was much disappointed; for his rebellious subjects attributed his successes more to good fortune than wisdom or courage, and they seemed only to be in want of a chief to lead them to open rebellion. Selim put himself at the head of these rebels; but, in the course of two years' contest, Selim lost his head, and Mamoud returned in triumph to his capital.

The man who has long been accustomed to scenes of blood and slaughter, will naturally become hardened and of savage feelings, totally the reverse of those of pity, tenderness, and humanity. Almost every day convinced Mamoud, that he must part with either his tender feelings or his throne. He wished to pursue the middle path between clemency and tyranny ; but the rebellious spirit of his subjects by degrees so hardened his heart, that he at last became the complete tyrant.

The people soon began to groan under the weight of his iron hand, and offered up their prayers to the great prophet for a peaceful king, such as Mamoud had been. Alas! all their prayers were in vain, for Mamoud was young and vigorous, and beloved by his army. He was once loved, he was now dreaded, in every part of the Persian empire.

The califf, after having some time exercised his tyranny with a high hand, suddenly withdrew from public affairs, and shut himself up in the recesses of his palace, visible to no one but the emir he had always trusted. In this unprecedented solitude he passed his time during the whole course of a moon, and then suddenly appeared again on his throne. A visible alteration had taken place on his countenance, and, instead of the ferocity of a tyrant, clemency and mercy seemed seated on his brow. He was no longer the savage califf, but the father of his country.

Such an unexpected change undoubtedly became the universal topic of conversation, and various reasons were assigned for this sudden transformation, but none of their conjectures came near the truth. An accident, however, brought everything to light.

Among the wise men of Ispahan was Alicaun, who was one day conversing with an iman and several dervises, concerning the change of the califf's conduct. One of the dervises laid claim to the honour of this change, having obtained it of Mahomet by fasting and prayer. Another said that this great work had been accomplished by a beauty in the seraglio ; but an iman or priest was bold enough to contradict them both, and boasted that it was by his remonstrances that the califf's heart was softened.

Alicaun being then called upon to give his opinion replied, 'The lion, weary of the chace, lies down to repose a little; but let the traveller be upon his guard. Perhaps he is only sleeping to recover his lost strength, and that when he wakes, he may rush forth with additional fury.'

One of the treacherous dervises reported this conversation to the califf, and, in consequence thereof, Alicaun was ordered to appear before him.

Alicaun accordingly made his appearance, when the califf, having taken his seat at the tribunal, thus addressed him: 'I have been informed of the particulars of your late conversation, and your having compared me to the noble lion can have nothing in it that ought reasonably to offend me; but tell me sincerely, in which of these lights you considered the lion, as the generous monarch of the forest, or as the savage tyrant?'

Alicaun bowed down his head to the earth, and replied, 'My sovereign, you have ordered me to speak sincerely: I will obey your orders, regardless of the consequences that may follow. When I lately took the liberty to compare you to the lion, I must own I had in my view the ferocity of that animal. I am sensible I deserve to die: your decree will determine whether you are the monarch of the forest or the savage tyrant. Should you be graciously pleased to spare me, it will turn to your own advantage; because, if you condemn me to die, my accusers will think I spoke truth; but pardon me, and they will be confounded.'

'I forgive you, Alicaun,' said the califf, 'and I will tell you, and all present, my motive for doing so. You are not a stranger to the influence my favourite emir, Abdalla, has over me. Like many other monarchs, I became jealous of my favourite, on the unbounded acclamations he received, on his return home from a war of no great consequence. I therefore resolved on putting him to death, but was at a loss in what manner I should accomplish that end.

'To attempt it by open violence would endanger my throne; I therefore resolved to do it by stratagem. At the bottom of my palace gardens, you all know, is a tremendous precipice, whose base is washed by the waters of the Tigris.

Hither I resolved to take him, under the idea of consulting him on some important matters of state, and, when I found him off his guard, as he could not suspect my intentions, to shove him headlong over the precipice into the river.

‘Thought I in myself, this is the last sun Abdalla will ever behold; for, by this time, we had reached the fatal spot, when on a sudden, by chance, let me say rather by the will of heaven, the ground trembled beneath my feet, and I perceived part of the rock on which I stood was parting from the main body. At this critical moment, Abdalla seized me by the arm, and forcibly pulled me to him, otherwise I should certainly have fallen down the horrible precipice into the foaming billows beneath, and thus have met with that fate I designed for another.

‘Shame and gratitude for some moments struck me dumb and motionless: with shame, that a sovereign prince should stoop to such mean treachery; and with gratitude, that I should owe my life to that man, who saved mine at the very moment I was plotting his destruction!

‘I instantly retired to the most secret chamber in my palace, and opened my soul in prayer and thanksgiving to the Eternal. In this dejected situation I suffered several days and nights to glide away, bitterly reflecting on my folly, and reproaching myself for sinking so much beneath the real dignity of royalty. “What,” said I, “is the life of a sovereign more than that of his meanest subject, since the one is no more secure from the arrows of Death than the other!”

‘In a little time, by reasoning in this manner, I found all my tyranny and self-consequence humbled, and I wished in future to be considered only as a man. As the nights were long and tedious to me, in order to divert my mind from painful and disagreeable reflections, I resolved to take my rambles in disguise through the different parts of Ispahan.

‘Among these rambles, chance carried me one night into a house of public entertainment. Here, while drinking the liquor I had ordered, I listened to the conversation of several parties round me.

‘One of these parties consisted of a grave old man, sur-

rounded by several youths, who seemed to pay the greatest veneration and attention to the words of the aged sire. I drew nearer to them, and was surprised to find them talking of the late transaction between me and Abdalla. The substance of their debates will never be erased from my memory.

“There was a time,” said the old man, “when all Persia would have extolled to the skies the generous action of Abdalla; but I fear there is not at present a single voice that will thank him for saving the life of the califf.”

‘One of the youths, who I found was the old man’s son, said he perfectly agreed in what he had mentioned, but advised him, at the same time, to be cautious in his observations; for, said he, “What is more quick than the ears of a tyrant, or more baneful than the tongue of a courtier?”

“I fear not,” said the venerable old man, “the ears of a tyrant, nor the tongue of a courtier. The most they can do is to shorten a life that has already almost finished its career. A man on the verge of fourscore has little to fear from the terrors of this life. My father, who has been dead half that time, left behind him in his cellar nine bottles of wine of a most delicious flavour. Believe me, this is the only liquor I ever dared to drink in opposition to the laws of Mahomet; and not even this, but on very particular occasions; nor have I yet consumed the whole.

“I drank the first two bottles,” continued the old man, “on the birth of your eldest brother. Two other bottles were despatched when the father of the present califf delivered Persia from the invasion of a tyrant, and two others when the present tyrant mounted the throne. Believe me, I shall be happy to live to treat you with the other three bottles, when Mamoud shall be called into the next world, to give an account of his conduct in this. Yet I would much rather wish to drink them with you, should he reform, cease to be a tyrant, and again become that good prince he one day was.”

‘The company could not help smiling at such a declaration; but I was far from wishing to partake of their mirth. Had the old man, but a few days before, uttered

such words as those, his head would undoubtedly have been the price of his temerity; but what would then have excited my revenge, now filled my mind with the deepest reflections. I stole away for fear of being discovered, and hastened home to my palace, there to ruminate by myself on this adventure. "It is evident," said I to myself, "that I must have been the worst of tyrants, since this good old man, who drank but two bottles at the birth of his eldest son, wishes to drink three on the news of my decease. He hopes for such an event, to crown all his wishes, and to complete his victory."

'In this manner my thoughts were agitated, and it was not till some time afterwards I recollected he said, "that he should finish his bottle with still greater pleasure, should he hear of my reformation. All my former notions of tyranny and power appeared to vanish before me, and my heart seemed to receive impressions of a different nature. To accomplish this work, was my motive for being so long hidden from public view, and from thence has arisen that change in my conduct, with which I see all my good subjects so much astonished and delighted. I will endeavour to change no more, but to live in the affections of my people. I leave you now to judge whether the good old man may not venture to drink his remaining three bottles."'

'Those three bottles are already drank,' exclaimed a youth, while he was endeavouring to penetrate through the crowd of courtiers to the throne. As soon as he got to the califf he threw himself at his feet, and again exclaimed, 'Commander of the faithful under Mahomet, they are already drank!'

Mamoud then ordered him to rise, and asked him who he was that had thus spoken. The youth replied, 'Most gracious sovereign, I am one of five children of whom the old man you have just mentioned is the father. I was one of the party in that conversation which has made such a noble and generous impression on your royal heart. As we were yesterday surrounding him, he thus addressed us: "I feel nature is nearly exhausted in me; but I shall now die with pleasure, since I have lived to see such an enex-

pected reformation in Mamoud. Let us drink the three remaining bottles, and be merry.”

The califf then ordered him to fetch his father, that he might have the sire and son always near him. The youth then retired, and Mamoud dismissed the assembly for the present.

Thus you see, my youthful readers, how easily you are to be led astray by your passions, when you suffer them to prevail over reason. Learn early to give law to your passions, or your passions will in time give law to you, and govern you with a tyrannical power.

THE BEAUTIFUL STATUE.

ONE of the kings of Balsora proved unfortunate in the choice of his queen, whose temper was as disgusting and displeasing, as her person was lovely and beautiful. Discontented with every one around her, she made her own life miserable, and did all she could to interrupt the happiness of others.

They had an only son, and his father began very early to turn his thoughts, in what manner he should secure the young prince, when he came of age, from forming a connection in matrimony so disagreeable as his own. ‘If it should please heaven,’ said he, ‘to spare my life till my son shall attain the years of discretion, I then shall be able properly to direct him in the search for a prudent wife; but, as there is no certainty in human life, and as I may be taken from him in his early days, before he will be capable of comprehending my admonitions, I will leave proper instructions with my executors, who, I hope, will fulfil my requests, when I shall be at rest in my peaceful grave.’

In consequence of this resolution, the king took every precaution he thought necessary in so important a business, and scarcely had he finished his regulations, when the unrelenting decree of death summoned him from this world, to take up his eternal abode in the ever-blooming regions of felicity.

No sooner was the king dead than his will was examined.

By this it was directed that his son Achmet should be instructed in all the principles of rigid virtue, and in every scientific accomplishment necessary to form the mind of a wise and good prince. It was also directed that, at the age of eighteen years, he should be put in possession of all his wealth, which was deposited in spacious vaults under the palace. The will, however, strongly directed, that these vaults were not to be opened, under any pretence whatever, before the appointed time, on pain of Achmet losing the whole contents of them.

It may easily be supposed, what were the anxieties of a youthful mind, while he waited with impatience for the arrival of that day, which was to make him master of so many hidden treasures. At length the day arrived, the vaults were opened, and the heart of Achmet leaped within his bosom at the sight of such unbounded riches.

Amidst all this glare of profuse wealth, in one particular apartment of the vault, the eye of Achmet was caught by the dazzling view of nine pedestals of massy gold, on eight of which stood as many beautiful adamantine statues.

Achmet could not help expressing his astonishment, where his father could collect such uncommon and valuable curiosities. The ninth pedestal, however, increased his surprise, and he could not conceive why that alone should be without a statue on it. On going nearer to it, he found it covered with a piece of satin, upon which were written these words: 'My dear Achmet, the acquisition of these statues has cost your father much; yet, beautiful as they are, you see there is one wanting, which is far more brilliant than either of those which now present themselves to your view. This, however, must be sought for in a remote quarter of the world, and, if you wish to be possessed of it, you must depart for Cairo, in the kingdom of Egypt. You will there find one Alibeg, formerly one of my slaves. Inform him who you are, and what is your business. He will properly direct your pursuits after this incomparable statue, the possession of which will make you one of the happiest and greatest monarchs of the east.'

As soon as Achmet had appointed proper persons to

govern his kingdom in his absence, he set out in quest of this grand object. He pursued his journey without any thing particular happening, and, on his arrival at Cairo, he soon found out the house of Alibeg, who was supposed to be one of the richest persons in that city.

As Alibeg knew the time was nearly advanced in which he was to expect a visit from Achmet, the arrival of the latter at Cairo did not at all surprise him. However, he appeared ignorant of the business, inquired of him what brought him to that city, his name, and his profession. To all these questions Achmet gave the most satisfactory answers, and informed him, that it was a statue he was engaged in the pursuit of.

This declaration of Achmet seemed at once to convince Alibeg that he was talking with the son of the late king, and he blessed the Great Prophet for permitting him so honourable an interview. 'My dear and honoured prince,' said Alibeg, 'your father bought me as a slave, and never made me free; consequently I am a slave still, and all my property is yours.' 'From this moment,' replied Achmet, 'you are a free man, and I for ever renounce any future claim on your person or possessions.'

Alibeg then assured the young king that he would do every thing in his power to procure him the ninth statue he was so ardent in the pursuit of; but advised him, after so fatiguing a journey, to take a few weeks' rest. The next day, however, the king told Alibeg that he was sufficiently rested, that he came not there for pleasure, and therefore wished immediately to enter on the pursuit of his grand object.

Alibeg told him that he should certainly obtain his wish; but reminded him that he must encounter much toil and fatigue before he could accomplish that desirable end. 'I fear neither toils nor fatigues,' replied the young king. 'I am equal to the task, and by the blessings of the Great Prophet, I will undertake any thing, however difficult it may appear. I entreat you only to let me know what part I am to act.'

Alibeg, after a short pause, thus addressed his youthful sovereign: 'You must swear to me by the Holy Prophet,

that, when you set out from hence, you will immediately return to your own dominions. As soon as you arrive on the borders of it, you will immediately proceed on the search of what I am going to direct you. Your search must be to find out a youthful female, whose age must not exceed fifteen years, nor be less than fifteen. She must be the offspring of virtuous parents, and who has never been the dupe to a previous passion of love. She must be as lovely as Venus, as chaste as Diana, and a native of your own kingdom. You must therefore traverse every part of your extensive dominions; and, as soon as you shall be so fortunate to find one who corresponds with this description, you must bring her to me, and I will soon after put you in possession of the statue you sigh for. Remember, however, that should your pursuits be attended with success, you must have the most rigorous command over your passions while you are conducting the fair one hither, and not have even the least conversation with her. If this last condition be not punctually fulfilled, you will lose all claim to what you are now in pursuit of. Consider within yourself, whether the possession of the statue has so many charms in it, as to enable you to surmount all these obstacles so difficult to one of your age.'

The young king, with an ardour natural to a youth of his years, was going to reply, when Alibeg stopped him by saying, that he had not yet done, but had still something further to say on the subject.

'You may idly imagine,' continued Alibeg, 'that should you be fortunate enough to find such a maiden as I have described to you, and your youthful ideas should lead you astray, you may imagine they will not be discovered; but herein you will be mistaken, for the Great Prophet will reveal your deceit, and you will thereby infallibly lose all pretensions to the statue. I must tell you still further, that, in order to give a sanction to your search for so virtuous a maiden, you must cause it to be reported that you mean to make her the lawful partner of your throne.'

Achmet listened with attention to every word that dropped from the mouth of Alibeg, and in proportion as difficulties

were mentioned to him, the more did his youthful bosom burn to show how much he was above them. He eagerly took the oath prescribed to him, grew more and more impatient to become possessed of the statue, and thought every hour an age that retarded his departure in pursuit of this favourite object.

The next morning, Alibeg, being unwilling to abate the ardour of the young prince, presented him with a looking-glass. 'I here give you,' said he to Achmet, 'an invaluable present. In the course of your pursuit you will meet with many beautiful damsels, fair to external appearances as Aurora herself; but outward forms may deceive you, and what your eye may applaud, your heart, on a more intimate acquaintance, may despise. Believe, me, royal youth, the beauties of the person and those of the mind are very different. A degenerate and wicked heart may be concealed under the most lovely external appearances. Whenever, therefore, you meet with a beautiful female, whose charms may dazzle your eye, tell her to breathe upon this mirror. If she be chaste, her breath will not long remain upon the glass; but, if her pretensions are not founded in truth, her breath will long remain on the mirror as a testimony of the falsehood she has advanced.'

These useful lessons, which Alibeg gave his royal pupil, were not the result of thoughts of his own, but were the consequence of the wise plan the late king of Balsora had prescribed for his son. He well knew that little artifices of this nature seldom failed of succeeding with youthful minds naturally fond of mystery.

The young prince took an affectionate leave of Alibeg, promised to be punctual to all his instructions, and then taking up his miraculous glass, took the direct road from Egypt to Balsora. His intention was to commence his inquiries as soon as he reached the borders of his dominions; but a thought struck him, that it would be mean in him to seek the wished-for damsel among shepherds and peasants, when his own court furnished such a display of beauties.

As soon as he arrived in his own dominions, he proclaimed the resolution he had taken concerning marriage. He invited

every maiden of fifteen years of age, who was born of virtuous parents, and had never experienced the passion of love, to repair to his court, out of which he proposed to choose the fortunate partner of his crown and empire.

This proclamation soon surrounded his palace with the first beauties of the kingdom; but as soon as the king presented to them the mirror, which was to be the touchstone of their prudence, they all shrunk back from the trying ordeal, conscious that they could not with safety to their characters run the hazard of such a trial.

Here it seems necessary to say a few words by way of explanation, lest the youthful part of my readers should be led into an error. The properties which Alibeg ascribed to this looking-glass were merely fabulous, and calculated only to strike a terror on the minds of youthful females, who, from the apprehensions of being discovered in their attempt to deceive an eastern monarch, refused to breathe on the glass. So that the young prince could not find, in any part of his capital, a maiden of fifteen perfectly answerable to the terms proposed by Alibeg.

Achmet, being thus disappointed in his capital, traversed every part of his dominions, and visited even the most sequestered villages; but he everywhere found the morals of the people so very corrupt, that no maiden could be found who would venture to look on the mirror, which they apprehended would reveal their most trifling defects. Achmet, therefore, began to be disheartened, and feared he should at last be disappointed in the grand object of his pursuit, and never be able to obtain the statue he so ardently sighed for.

As he was one evening reposing himself in a mean habitation, situated in a lonely and recluse village, an iman came to pay him a visit, having previously learned what was the cause of the king's journey. 'I must confess,' said he to the king, 'that your majesty is engaged in a very difficult pursuit; and I should be led to believe, that all your researches would be in vain, did I not know of a beautiful damsel who perfectly answers to the description of your wants. Her father was formerly a vizier of Balsora; but he

has now left the court, and leads a private and recluse life, solely occupied in the education of his daughter. If it is your pleasure, royal sir, I will to-morrow attend you to the habitation of this lovely damsel. Her father will undoubtedly be exceedingly happy to have the king of Balsora for his son-in-law.'

Achmet very prudently replied, 'I cannot think of promising to marry the beauty you mention till I have seen her, and have put her to those trials which none have yet been able to withstand. I am satisfied with your account of her beauty, but I must have proof of her virtue and prudence.' The king then told him of the glass he had in his possession, and which had hitherto so far terrified every damsel, that none had dared to look into it.

The iman, however, still persisted in every thing he had advanced concerning this beautiful female, and, in consequence, they went the next morning to see her and her father. As soon as the old gentleman was acquainted with the real character and business of his royal visitor, he ordered his daughter Elvira to attend unveiled. The king was struck with wonder and astonishment when he beheld in this beautiful damsel such perfections as his court could not equal. After gazing on her some time with inexpressible astonishment, he pulled out his glass, and acquainted the lovely Elvira with the severe trial she would be put to on looking into that mirror of truth. Her conscious innocence derided all fear; she breathed on the glass without the least apprehension, when the high-polished surface rejected the breath thrown on it, and soon recovered its usual brightness.

As Achmet was now in possession of the person he had so long wished for, he asked her father to give him his permission to marry her, to which he readily consented; and the marriage ceremony was performed with all the decency a country village would admit of.

Achmet, however, could not help feeling the impressions which the charms of Elvira had made on his mind; and, though he hastened the preparations for his departure, yet it was with evident marks of reluctance. The vizier, who

attended him in the pursuit of this fair one, plainly perceived it, and inquired the cause of it.

It seemed very singular to Achmet that the vizier should ask him such a question. 'Can there be any creature,' said he, 'more lovely than the angel I have married? Can you be any ways surprised, should I be tempted to dispute the instructions of Alibeg, and place her as the partner on my throne?'

'Be cautious what you do,' said the vizier. 'It will not be becoming of a prince like you to lose the statue, after you have done so much to obtain it.' This rebuke roused him, and he determined not to lose it; but he desired the vizier to keep her from his sight, as he feared he had seen her too much already.

As soon as every thing was ready, Achmet set out for Cairo, and, on his arrival there, was introduced to Alibeg. The fair bride had performed the journey in a litter, and had not seen the prince since she was married. She inquired where she was, and whether that was her husband's palace.

'It is time, madam,' said Alibeg, 'to undeceive you. Prince Achmet only aimed at getting you from your father, as a present to our sultan, who wishes to have in his possession such a beautiful living picture as you are.' At these words, Elvira shed a torrent of tears which greatly affected both Achmet and Alibeg. As soon as her grief would permit her to speak, 'How can you,' said she, 'be so treacherous to a stranger? Surely the Great Prophet will call you to an account for this act of perfidy!'

However, her tears and arguments were in vain. Achmet, indeed, seemed to feel for her situation which Alibeg viewed with pleasure. 'You have now performed your promise,' said he to Achmet, 'by bringing hither this beautiful virgin. The sultan will undoubtedly reward you by putting you in possession of the statue you seek after. I will immediately send a person to Balsora to fetch the pedestal; and, within the compass of nine days, you may expect to see it and the statue in one of the apartments of my palace; for surely you only are worthy of such a precious possession.'

Elvira was immediately separated from Achmet; she

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made the bitterest bewailings, and wished for death to hide her sorrows and disgrace. Notwithstanding the fond desire of Achmet to be in possession of the statue, he could not reconcile his mind to the hard fate of Elvira. He reproached himself with having taken her from an indulgent father, to throw her into the arms of a tyrant. He would sometimes say with a sigh, 'O beautiful damsel, cruel indeed is your condition!'

At the expiration of the nine days which had passed between hope and sorrow, Achmet was conducted into an apartment of the palace, in order to be put in possession of the inestimable statue. But it is impossible to express his astonishment and surprise, when, instead of such a figure as he expected, he beheld the beautiful maiden he had seduced from her father.

'Achmet,' said the lovely virgin, 'I doubt not but your expectations are sadly disappointed in finding me here instead of the inestimable statue you expected, and to obtain which you have taken so much pains.' As soon as Achmet had recovered from his surprise, 'The Great Prophet can bear me witness,' said he, 'that I was frequently tempted to break the oath I had solemnly taken to Alibeg, and sacrifice the idea of every statue in the world to you. I love my dear, beautiful Elvira more than all the world besides!'

'Prince Achmet,' said Alibeg, 'this is the ninth statue which you have so long been in pursuit of, and which was the intention of your father, who had contrived this method, in order to procure you a queen with whom you might be happy. Love her tenderly, be faithful to her, and in proportion as you endeavour to procure her happiness, so will she yours.'

Achmet, enraptured with the lovely countenance and virtuous dispositions of his dear Elvira, that day proclaimed her queen of Balsora, and thereby amply made her amends for the short disquietude he had occasioned her.

We may from hence draw this conclusion, that merit is not everywhere to be found; but, like diamonds of the first lustre, take up much toil and time in the pursuit of. What we gain too easily we are apt to think too little of, and we

are accustomed to estimate the value of everything, in proportion to the care and pains it costs us. This the wise father of Achmet well knew, and therefore devised those means which were most likely to enable him to discover the woman of beauty, virtue, and prudence, without leaving him any hopes of finding it in the lap of pride, indolence, and luxury.

THE END.

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